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北京青年报  
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

# Sparks of imagination



Though on the surface the modern art industry seems fixated on fame and fortune, it all boils down to creativity – something these 10 young artists excel at.

Their works have been selected for Focus on Talents, a project to discover up-and-coming young artists and prove that the '80s generation has much to offer the art world.

Though many of their works were called "immature," curator Huang Du says he sees in them a spark of energy and new ideas.

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## Indie designs online

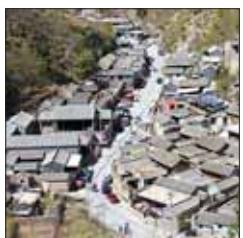
This new website is selling apparel and accessories by more than 30 young designers.



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## Erhu obsession

To the ears of American Janelle Smith, the soulful erhu is a "Chinese violin."



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## Living history

Despite extensive redevelopment, Cuandixia retains its essence: its streets echo a bygone era.

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gymnast sues  
for justice

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Subways a  
'real China'  
experience

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Rich move  
money from  
city to farms

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EU laws may  
pull herbal  
medicine

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# April CPI up 5.3%, PPI up 6.8%

The consumer price index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, rose 5.3 percent in April from a year ago, the National Bureau of Statistics said Wednesday.

The April figure was down 0.1 percentage points from March's 32-month high of 5.4 percent, the bureau reported.

"Price rises have been held in check, indicating that the country's price control measures have achieved preliminary results," spokesman Sheng Laiyun said.

Food prices, which account for nearly a third of the basket of goods in the nation's CPI calculation, surged 11.5 percent year on year. Non-food prices rose 2.7 percent from a year earlier.

China has adjusted the weight of items in its CPI calculation from the start of the year – with the food weighting pushed down 2.21 percentage points and property-related weighting up 4.22 percentage points.

The producer price index, a main gauge of inflation at the wholesale level, rose 6.8 percent in April from a year ago, down 0.5 percentage points from the previous month.

Sheng attributed the smaller PPI increase to last April's high base and fluctuating commodity prices in the global market.

Last month, consumer prices



*That the CPI fell 0.1 percent from March to April may be a sign the government's price controls are working.*

CFP Photo

rose 5.2 percent in urban areas and 5.8 percent in rural regions, compared with a year earlier. The April CPI remains above the government's target of 4 percent for the year.

There remain uncertainties in curbing inflation but prices will be kept stable as long as local authorities strictly carry out the central government's policies, Sheng said.

Government measures to contain vegetable prices are having an effect, said Wang Xiaoguang, a research fellow at the Policy Advisory Department of the Chinese Academy of Governance.

He said he expected the CPI to drop slightly in the second quarter from the first quarter's 5 percent growth.

This quarterly inflation downward trend would continue, said

Wang, forecasting a lower than 4 percent quarterly CPI growth rate in the third quarter and less than 3 percent growth in the forth.

"Imported inflation eased last month but there is still abundant liquidity in the domestic market. The authorities will take the GDP growth into consideration before further tightening moves," said Zhuang Jian, senior economist with Asian Development Bank.

If GDP continues to grow at between 8 and 9 percent, there will be more tightening measures, Zhuang said.

The People's Bank of China, the central bank, announced its second interest rate hike of the year on April 5.

The one-year deposit interest rate has climbed to 3.25 percent

while the one-year loan interest rate presently stands at 6.31 percent.

To mop up the excessive liquidity, the central bank has raised its reserve requirement ratio for commercial banks four times since the beginning of this year.

The broad money supply, which covers cash in circulation and all deposits, increased 16.6 percent year on year as of the end of March, 0.9 percentage points higher than that as of the end of February. The increase exceeded the government's target ceiling of 16 percent for 2011 that was set in a government work report released in March.

Wang downplayed the direct impact of increasing money supply on CPI growth, claiming that inflation would have already hit double digits if it had direct link with the money supply.

"There could be another reserve requirement ratio hike in May. The slower industrial expansion does not necessarily mean the economy will slow down. The tightening trend will continue for a while," said Lu Zhengwei, chief economist with Industrial Bank Co.

China's industrial value-added output rose 13.4 percent year on year in April, down from March's 14.8-percent growth, the NBS said Wednesday.

(Xinhua)

## Ministry-UNICEF quake work an impressive success

By Li Zhixin

In the second grade classroom of Shili Zhongxin Primary School, Xihe County, Gansu Province, 8-year-old Ren Xiang always comes early for morning reading.

Her school has changed dramatically the last two years with the help of the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"I am so happy to recite Chinese text and English words in the new classroom. The environment makes me love studying," she said.

The Wenchuan quake of 2008 damaged or destroyed 334 schools and kindergartens in Xihe County. Since the launch of UNICEF and the ministry's joint "Rebuilding Better Life Project" in 2009, 39 schools have been built for more than 9,000 students.

The three-year-long project constructed classrooms, teaching facilities and plumbing, and also stocked the schools with books and provided new training to the faculty.

"We aim to offer students a safe environment and loving atmosphere that will boost their physical and emotional health. The schools' faces have changed tremendously, and for the students here it's like a whole new life," a spokesperson for the ministry said.

But the project extends far beyond Xihe County.

As of last month, 3,839 schools had been constructed in quake-hit areas of Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi provinces, making the ministry's task 96 percent complete, according to the National Development and Reform Commission.

The project's funds have also extended to other public services.

The quake zones constructed and restored some 2,169 new hospitals, 841 kilometers of expressway, 5,855 kilometers of truck roads and 40,178 kilometers of rural highways. Large transportation projects like the Chengdu-Duijiangyan railway and the Duijiangyan-Wenchuan expressway are also operational.

The commission's report said the reconstruction had achieved impressive results: 1,817 rural construction projects, including agricultural production facilities, rural infrastructure and agricultural industry, were completed.

Another 5,279 recovery and reconstruction projects related to industrial enterprise, tourism and culture were completed as well, it said.

# Pop star could face slam for DUI



*Gao Xiaosong was detained after his wild driving caused a multi-car collision Monday night.*

Photo provided by The Legal Mirror

By Han Manman

Pop star Gao Xiaosong pledged Wednesday that he would never again drive while drunk after he was detained by Beijing police.

The 42-year-old singer and the most outspoken judge on several variety shows was detained after his wild driving caused a multi-car collision involving four vehicles that injured four people Monday night, police reported.

A blood test showed Gao had 243 milligrams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood – almost three times the legal limit, police reported.

Gao was detained Tuesday morning and may face between one

and six months of imprisonment under the newly-amended Road Traffic Safety Law that came into effect on May 1, Xinhua reported.

He was among the first nine drivers to be caught driving while under the influence of alcohol since the new law took effect.

The amended law stipulated that drunk drivers have their licenses revoked and wait five years before applying for a new license. A drunk driving conviction only carried a three- to six-month suspension before the amendment.

In recent years, fatal car accidents in Chengdu, Nanjing and Hangzhou have triggered a call for

harsher penalties.

While many believed the new law would send all drunk drivers to jail, Chinese courts on Tuesday ordered that judges adjust their interpretation of the law.

Zhang Jun, vice president of the Supreme People's Court, said the public misunderstands the amendment. He said convictions will not be solely based upon whether the incident meets the criteria of drunk driving.

According to the recently revised Criminal Law, if a driver's hazardous behavior does not result in significant harm, it will not be considered a criminal offense,

Zhang said.

Zhang told Xinhua that criminal law only stipulates that incidents of drunk driving are criminal offenses – it does not elaborate on the consequences or the severity required for a conviction.

As for media reports that Gao held a US passport that would help him skirt possible conviction, an official at the Dongcheng District Detachment of the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau said, "That's impossible."

"Gao is Chinese. Even if he also holds a foreign passport, he will face the penalty if convicted of drunk driving here in China," he said.

# Activists rage over clinic that bleeds strays

By Wei Xi

Microbloggers have been buzzing over reports that a Beijing animal hospital has been harvesting blood from captured strays for use on its canine patients.

Jinse Jijie, a Sina microblogger and animal rights activist, wrote that a pet clinic near Jinsong has been capturing stray dogs to bleed for them transfusions. Two of its abused strays were reportedly dying due to blood loss.

"The hospital drew more than 150 milliliters of blood from one of the strays over two days. Each time doctors bled the dog, it was left too weak to eat for the next 12 hours," she wrote.

The clinic was selling the blood for 10 yuan per milliliter, she wrote.

Jinse Jijie's post was accompanied by a photograph of one of the stray dogs passed out with its eyes shut and tongue hanging out.

Xiao Yuan Er, another Sina microblogger, wrote that she and several volunteers confronted hospital administrators about the blood collecting on May 7.

In its coverage of the story, *Beijing Morning Post* said a woman surnamed Sheng was the first to break the news.

Sheng told *Beijing Morning Post* that she learned the animal hospital was bleeding strays when she took her ill dog to the clinic. She said a doctor there told her that her dog needed 20 milliliters of blood.

The blood was drawn from a yellow dog, she said. "The staff at

the hospital told me it was a stray dog," Sheng said.

The head of the hospital, surnamed Zhou, denied that her staff had been drawing blood from stray dogs for use in transfusions.

"Our policy is not to comment, but we are open to supervision from anyone willing to investigate," Zhou said.

She said the hospital's blood supply came from dogs raised at China Agricultural University and from some local blood banks.

"These so-called animal rights activists framed us to make themselves famous," Zhou said.

The vice director of a Haidian District pet clinic surnamed Song said he was not willing to speak about how the city's clinics go about collecting blood for use in transfusions on dog patients.

"I don't want our clinic to get involved," he said.

In a QQ group organized by Ruijia Animal Rescue Voluntary Society, a netizen calling himself "J" said he was told by the nurses at "the most authoritative pet clinic in Beijing" that stray dogs were the city's primary source of blood.

"The nurses told me they kept a record of each time they collected blood and would not draw blood too often," J said in an online interview conducted on Tencent's QQ messenger.

J said he saw normal blood collection as the stray dogs' obligation to the clinics.

"For strays, the most important thing is survival. These clinics often provide them with food and shelter," he said.

The reported incident at the Jinsong hospital is not the first case of strays being used for blood in either Beijing or the country.

As early as 2006, *Nanjing Daily* reported that one clinic was buying dogs from the market and bleeding them to death to source blood for the transfusion on a St. Bernard.

Another pet clinic in Jiangsu Province admitted to raising dogs solely for the purpose of providing transfusions to the pets of its clients.



Jinse Jijie published this photo of the stray dog that was bled too often. Photo from Jinse Jijie's blog



Many reports say strays are being bled to save pets all over the country.

IC Photo

## Social Web tools help crushes pair up

By Yao Weijie

Most people have had a crush: a secret love they were unable to confess. Often it's the fear of rejection that keeps their passion bottled up forever.

Crush Notifier makes that a thing of the past.

The third-party application was recently linked to Facebook and quickly cloned by the social networking site Renren and Sina's Weibo microblog service.

Crush Notifier enables users to scan through their Friends list and tag other users they have a crush on. If a crush tags them back, the system sends both users a message.

The setup rules out the potential for rejection because crushes are revealed only when they are mutual.

Sina Weibo's crush features works by using the #profession# tag. By posting "#profession# I've got a crush on (someone)," the system will record a note. If the same user also posts "#profession# I've got a crush on (you)", both users will be notified.

While introduced only a few days ago, Weibo's #profession# tag has already been used on more than 2 million updates.

"It is a safe, easy and private tool for otaku (socially awkward) men and women to express their

feelings and find out if someone they like likes them back," said Wu Sijuan, a user who recently found love with Fancy Someone, Renren's version of the feature.

Wu is a shy girl who works for a book company. She had a crush on her colleague for four years that she never managed to confess. Having heard one of her friends talking about Fancy Someone, she opened her Renren account to tag her coworker.

She was immediately notified that her crush had reciprocated.

"It was fantastic! We both liked each other, and he had tagged me earlier in the month. Without this tool I might have been left

to always look at him from a distance and wonder," she said.

Renren announced in April that its Fancy Someone had helped 27,927 users connect with their crush.

Of course, the data may not be reliable.

Some people have been abusing Crush Notifiers to play pranks and practical jokes on their friends. Some existing couples tag each other for fun. Even exes are frequently found tagging each other.

"I tagged my ex-boyfriend on Renren. Three days later, I received a message informing me that he had tagged me too. We love each other, but we cannot be together. It

is so sad," one user wrote.

Misuses of Crush Notifier are rampant on Facebook, where users are allowed to tag up to 10 people each time.

"The Chinese equivalent only allows users to tag three persons a time, and they can't change their choices for up to a month," said Hao Yan, explaining why users in China tend to be more serious about their picks.

Many users of Facebook's Crush Notifier tag each other looking for a casual date, Hao said. "Many people think that the more dates they have, the better the chances they will fall in love," Hao said.

# Paralyzed gymnast seeks \$1.8 billion in US court



By Chu Meng

Thirteen years ago, gymnast and gold medalist Sang Lan was seriously injured in New York while preparing for the 4th Goodwill Games. The poor medical care that followed resulted in lifelong paralysis. Losing the use of her torso and legs made a bitter end to her rising sports career.

On April 28, her team of nine lawyers filed a lawsuit for \$1.8 billion in compensation in the US, naming three people and five institutions.

But will she be able to win a lawsuit that is so late in coming?

For Sang, who devoted her whole childhood to Chinese sports, it's not about winning or losing – it's how you play. Her lawsuit is a message to the world's sporting event hosts and the State's General Administration of Sports.

Sang Lan as a teen

Looking back on her life, 29-year-old Sang Lan is filled with regret.

The former professional gymnast trained her whole childhood for the chance to shine at the World Championships or at the Olympic Games. But her only achievement was a gold medal in the women's vaulting horse event at the Eighth National Games in 1997.

Her dreams were shattered due to poor medical care following a terrible accident at the 1998 Goodwill Games in New York. She was paralyzed from the chest down.

Now Sang is seeking justice.

Her nine lawyers, headed by the New York-based attorney Hai Ming, filed a lawsuit on her behalf in Manhattan's federal court on April 28.

The defendants named are AOL Time Warner Inc, the US Gymnastics Federation, TIG Insurance Co and two legal guardians who were supposed to look after Song following the accident.

Hai said TIG Insurance's failure to provide medical care for Sang is the cause of her permanent disability, and that AOL Time Warner and the US Gymnastics Organization were negligent for not ensuring she was better ensured.

*The Wall Street Journal* reported that AOL Time Warner and the US Gymnastics Federation refused to comment on the lawsuit.

## Human error

"It was not an accident at all. That is why Sang is filing a transnational lawsuit."

On July 22, 1998, then 17 years old, Sang arrived in New York as a member of the Chinese gymnastics team to the 4th Goodwill Games.

During warm-ups, she fell and landed on her neck while performing a timer. She could not raise herself from the mat and was taken to the hospital immediately.

A Sino-US joint press conference the following day announced that the incident was

an accident, and denied that any Games employees had a role in the accident.

"It was not an accident at all. That is why Sang is filing a transnational lawsuit," said Huang Jian, Sang's agent.

"It was by no means a mistake or an unforeseen accident," Sang wrote on her microblog. "In 1998, I was at the peak of my competitive ability. I was perfectly able to execute a cartwheel with a body twist, as well as harder movements."

Sang's lawyers said that during practice, an employee working for the organizers attempted to move away the mat as she was landing from a vault off the horse. The movement distracted her, causing her to fall and land headfirst on the floor.

"The disturbance caused me hesitate while doing a critical motion in the air. And that's what led to this tragedy," she wrote.



Sang Lan's father is accompanying her in Beijing. He arrived six months ago when she began preparing her lawsuit.

The Gymnastics Center, operated by the State General Administration of Sports, provides notoriously poor care to injured athletes and pitiful welfare payments.

Years of neglect and frustration with how the two countries handled her injury triggered her lawsuit.

For the last 13 years, Sang has required the use of a wheelchair. Neither the US organizers of the games nor China's sports authorities have provided Sang with any compensation. She has been given no aid in paying the last 10 years of medical bills.

As a "retired" athlete, Sang's monthly salary is 1,600 yuan, Hai said.

While some question the wisdom of launching legal proceedings 13 years after the accident, Hai said it is because TIG's refusal to cover her medical expenses is an ongoing issue.

"[It is] merely because she does not live in the US, which is simply discriminating based on the nationality of the disabled person. Justice may be late for her after 13 years, but it's better than never," Hai said.



The former professional gymnast and gold medalist Sang Lan has been using a wheelchair since her accident 13 years ago.

CFP Photos

## Hidden truths

Her national team coaches and guardians were ordered to say nothing at all about her accident when she was hospitalized 13 years ago.

As for her transnational lawsuit, Sang said she does not care if she wins.

Her goal is to make Chinese sports authorities recognize her injuries and provide equal treatment to disabled athletes, she said.

On her microblog, she wrote that the Chinese gymnastics team and relevant authorities ignored her after her injury.

She said she believes that laws and compensation systems in the US are better established than those in China, and that judicial proceedings in the US are more likely to uncover evidence and find witnesses.

"And that would bring in witnesses from the Chinese authorities. They would finally be forced to tell the truth," she wrote.

She said that her national team coaches and guardians were ordered to say nothing at all about her accident when she was hospitalized 13 years ago.

"Now my coach and most relevant personnel have retired from the gymnastics center, and they have nothing to do with those work units now. If I take legal action, the witnesses will have less to lose and may be willing to speak out," she wrote.

"I have been living in Beijing for 12 years and the Chinese gymnastics team has never invited me to its Spring Festival party. They also refuse to recognize me as

a retired athlete when I needed such a recommendation to participate in a charitable activity," she said.

Officials with the team have appealed to CCTV and other national outlets for a media blackout of Sang's story, fearful her accident may deter children from pursuing a career in gymnastics.

## Sending a message

"Regardless of whether Sang's lawsuit is a win or a loss, all the world's athletes will benefit from her decision to file it."

"Getting back up when you fall is the first step for any gymnast, and that's how I've lived my life. In the 13 years since my accident, I've been working hard to study and find another path for myself to succeed in life," Sang said.

Her story has drawn wide attention for its \$1.8 billion yuan claim, but she said she hopes the sky-high price of her claim will motivate the defendants she names to ensure that future competitors don't suffer from a similar accident.

"Regardless of whether Sang's lawsuit is a win or a loss, all the world's athletes will benefit from her decision to file it," said Zhang Luping, an editor at *All Sports* magazine.

He said the current system in China is too obsessed with chasing medals, and that retired athletes who gave their all to the sport deserve equal care when they are disabled or retired.

Whether or not the sports authorities are willing to respond to such an egalitarian calling remains to be seen.



Huang Jian, Sang Lan's agent and boyfriend

# Seeing the 'real' China

US linguist suggests to take a ride on capital's subway



More foreign travelers have been visiting China in recent years.

Wu Ting/CFP Photo

Deborah Fallows, an American linguist and author of *Dreaming in Chinese*, on Wednesday wrote an online article in *The Atlantic* that said the way to see the "real" China is to take a ride on Beijing's subway.

During the three years that she and her husband, the correspondent James Fallows, lived in China, she estimated she took 1,000 rides on the subways of Shanghai and Beijing. That adds up to roughly 500 hours, 2,000 yuan and an incalculable amount of social experience.

As Fallows writes: "The subway system in Beijing ramped up quickly after a slow start: Two lines opened in 1971, two more at the start of the 21st century, four more just about in time for the 2008 Olympics and another six since then. The expanded system had no discernable effect

on the congested roads, which are clogged with nearly 5 million cars, a number that will grow at a (controlled) rate of 20,000 per month in 2011. But it opened new worlds to me.

"My husband and I were so excited when the new number 10 line opened right outside our apartment building that we rushed to the station to be among the very first people in all of Beijing to try it."

Fallows said the line 10 changed their lives. "Suddenly, we could cross Beijing not only east to west on the old line 1, which conveniently passes the stretch of Western hotels (where we often had meetings), Tiananmen (where we often took visitors), the local shopping streets, the financial district, museums, the opera house and other grand landmarks.

"On the line 10, we could now zoom north from the central business district to the stadiums, past the expat dining and shopping streets, the diplomatic sections, the change to the airport and swing around west all the way to the university district. With that trajectory, the line 10 boasts a fairly upscale ridership – lots of students, always a few Westerners, middle-class workers with briefcases."

She said riders on line 10 "stood in two orderly queues along a painted stripe that marked the outside edge of the doors. As the train approached, no one budged. And furthermore, instead of the usual rush to board at the instant the doors opened, everyone stood like potted plants waiting for passengers to exit before boarding themselves."

An experience on line 1

changed her bad impression about the line. A migrant worker had slung a plastic grain sack over his shoulder, smacking her husband in the stomach. Another migrant worker, standing incredibly close, told his buddy to drop the bag.

As Fallows tells it: "The worker gently eased the sack off his shoulder to the floor, revealing a worn spot of fabric on his coat, rubbed entirely threadbare by the heavy sack – a telltale sign of how many miles this man had traveled, sack-over-shoulder."

"We were gone in two more stops," she writes. "But that image is always there, a reminder to me that the Beijing subway offers more than reliable and quick ride. It offers moments in real China. I have had 1,000 of them."

(Agencies)

## Weekly highlights

### High-speed Beijing-Shanghai railway to run trials

A long-anticipated high-speed railway between Beijing and Shanghai is due to begin trial operations Wednesday.

Railway investment is expected to reach 745.5 billion yuan this year, despite a 3.76 billion yuan loss on all rail operations in the first quarter, the financial news magazine *Caijing* reported, citing Railways Ministry spokesman Wang Yongping.

Wang said the ministry, which enjoys a virtual monopoly in the industry, would carry on with construction to suit the country's level of economic and social development.

That is down 12.3 percent from earlier plans, but not as huge a cutback as earlier reports by some media had suggested following an announcement last month that China would slow down its bullet trains. There were complaints that the trains were dangerously fast and overly expensive.

### Road accidents take a murderous turn

When 21-year-old Chongqing native Tian Houbo hit a female beggar while driving home from work last December, he simply drove on.

An hour later, he returned – not to help but to back his wheel over the woman to make sure she would not live to talk.

Last Saturday, a driver from Fuzhou, Fujian Province, reportedly did the same when he reversed his car to run over a young girl he had knocked down earlier.

The man, said to be in his 50s, got down to take a look before he got back behind the wheel and drove over the girl again, eyewitnesses told the local media.

The victim, 6, died, and the driver has since been arrested by police.

These fatal cases come after Xi'an music student Yao Jiaxin, 21, was sentenced to death last month for stabbing a woman cyclist six times to silence her after she was injured by his car last October.

### Two-headed child alive ... and well?

A hospital in southwest China claims having conjoined twin girls with a single body and two heads were born at its facility.

A staffer surnamed Wang at the Suining City Central Hospital in Sichuan Province says the girls were born Thursday.

Wang said Tuesday that the parents, who are farmers, did not want to have the babies at first, fearing they could not afford to keep them alive. She said they transferred the twins to a hospital in nearby Chongqing to be examined by experts.

According to the local *Huaxi Metropolis Daily*, the twins weighed 4 kilograms and measured 53 centimeters. They have two spines and two esophagi but share other organs. Doctors were quoted as saying it would be nearly impossible to separate them.

(Agencies)

## Expert

### Foreign media's view on China is becoming more positive

By Li Zixin

With the deepening of reforms and opening up to the outside world, we are entering an era of cultural pluralism that respects other people's observations and feelings. More and more foreigners are writing about their personal experience in China through social networking services like Twitter and Facebook, which is also helping shape China's image.

For a fairly long time in the past, China criticized foreign media as negative and deeply influenced by ideological differences, especially foreign preju-

dice and misunderstanding of socialism and Communism. As China's global competitiveness has increased, those media has advanced a "China threat" theory to take the country down a notch. They still can't break away from their national superiority complex. They will continue to turn a blind eye toward actual similarities between Chinese and Western values.

But in recent years, especially after the Beijing Olympic Games, Wenchuan Earthquake and Yushu Earthquake, positive reports about China began to increase. China's economy

and soft culture were frequently praised.

Most foreigners know China through film and television, and in the many Chinatowns scattered across the US. Bruce Lee changed the world's view of Chinese people as the "sick man of Asia," and Jackie Chan, Jet Li, Yao Ming and others have continued to carry the torch. They've all improved China's image.

According to a new study about China's national image conducted by Communication University of China, among China-related reports in US

and European media, stories about overseas Chinese account for 39 percent, stories about political leaders account for 18.8 percent, performance stars 10 percent and professional scholars 4.9 percent.

It's obvious that those who live abroad affect China's image. In the new millennium, we hope more world media will focus on people who actually live in China: their stories will show how Chinese people really live.

– He Hui,  
professor at Communication  
University of China

# Farming fever

## Rich return to farms amid food safety, inflation concerns

By Huang Daohen

Scientists say you are what you eat, but these days it can be difficult to figure out exactly what that is.

There are new reports of food tampering every day. In search of safety, many well-off people are heading to suburban farms to grow their own organic carrots and cabbages.

For savvy businessmen who are barred from trading residential property, this organic obsession may become a fresh crop of investments.

### Growing your own

Fan Xuefang doesn't go to her local supermarket anymore. But she's not shopping online either.

This year, the 35-year-old housewife who works for a US law firm is getting her vegetables from a suburban farm that she maintains in her spare time.

"I don't trust the vegetables at the markets, and I don't have time to waste in supermarket lines," Fan said. She spent her past weekend harvesting carrots and cabbages on her small "farm," a 10-square-meter slab of land she rents in a suburb.

"This way I know how the vegetables were grown – I can't have that assurance at the market," Fan said. She goes to her farm once or twice a week to pick food and till the land.

Fan started farming last year after seeing an advertisement for Little Donkey Farm. The farm, founded by a Ph.D student at Renmin University of China in 2009, offers locals a chance to grow their own vegetables.

"I was curious at first and later found it really interesting," said Fan, who rents her small plot for 1,000 yuan per year. She now grows more than 10 vegetables throughout the year.

"I feel excited. Farming gives me healthy food and some of life's simple pleasures lost amid the city's fancy skyscrapers," he said.

Fan is not alone in her farming adventure.

In light of food scandals involving pork in Henan Province and steamed buns in Shanghai,



NetEase's founder Ding Lei announced recently his plans to open a modern swine farm in his hometown in Zhejiang Province.

CFP Photo

many are choosing to grow their own vegetables like Fan.

According to the farm, the number of people renting plots has risen to 120 from 20 in 2009.

### New land for investment

Fan may be happy about the profitable investment in her family's health, but she isn't thinking like a businessman.

With the real estate industry cooling off and food prices soaring, farming – more specifically

concentrate on a "more sustainable business."

There have been no shortage of people, even multi-millionaires, considering getting into the agricultural business.

Ding Lei, founder and chairman of NetEase, a leading Chinese Internet portal, is among the most prominent. Ding recently announced that he would build an 800-square-kilometer organic farm in his hometown in Zhejiang Province to rear pigs.

The Internet tycoon started the pig business in 2008 when he was revolted by odd meat served to him at a hotpot restaurant in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Ding later said he was personally concerned about food safety.

But Yang says Ding's move is really about diversifying his Internet business.

In Wenzhou, a Zhejiang coastal city known for its self-made millionaires, there were more than 500 businessmen investing into agriculture last year. The city government reported that their investment totaled 6 billion yuan.

"I should get into this [farming-business] too," Yang said. "As long as people need to eat, this market won't collapse."

According to media reports, Internet tycoons who are dipping into the farming market include Chen Yizhou, chairman of Oak Pacific Interactive, the owner of Renren, and Liu Qiangdong, founder and CEO of online business-to-consumer retailer 360buy.com.

**"I feel excited. Farming gives me healthy food and some of life's simple pleasures lost amid the city's fancy skyscrapers."**

private farming – may be the next big thing for investment.

Yang Jixing, a toy manufacturer from Zhejiang Province, is thinking about branching out to agriculture.

"The real estate industry is getting saturated, and with the government's hard policy on speculation the market is becoming a dead end for private investors," he said.

Instead of tracking the ups and downs of housing prices, Yang now spends his days researching organic vegetables.

He has no plans to abandon his toy factory. With that business in the hands of his trusted manager, Yang says he can now

### Market watch

#### Organic food gains ground

Small but high-end agriculture business – like organic food and Ding Lei's organic pig farm – no doubt has potential, said Wen Yijun, an analyst at Oriental Securities in Beijing.

Food is essential to Chinese culture, Wen said. Wherever people meet, "Have you eaten yet?" is their common greeting.

Now, as people become wealthy, safe and healthy food is in demand – even if it comes at a higher price.

"Chinese people are becoming in favor of organic vegetables and fruits, and willing to pay for it," Wen said.

Statistics show that the sale of organic food reached 108 billion yuan on the domestic market last year, accounting for 1.5 percent of the country's total food sales.

But Wen said the industry will grow to 300 billion yuan by 2015. Within the next decade, organic food and its annual yield will enjoy an annual increase of 20 to 30 percent, according to a report by Oriental Securities.

Wen, however, said agriculture, like any other investment, has its risks – most notably government interference.

Occasionally, the government controls food prices to maintain market stability, Wen said. Vegetable prices are notoriously volatile, and could rise as much as 50 percent over a month and drop just as sharply.

Pork also experienced a bubble in 2008, when its price rose 60 percent within a few months.

But Wen said the industry, particularly organic food, will flourish as more people demand quality food and meat.

### Venture capital boom despite risk

By Huang Daohen

Though the country is seeing more overseas investment and outbound direct investment (ODI) is expected to overtake its foreign direct investment (FDI) within three years, many believe venture capital and private equity remain a booming opportunity.

Frank Marinaro, the partner who heads up US law firm Loeb & Loeb's Beijing office, said the country's fast economic growth is creating good investment opportunities and high profits for venture capitalists and private equity investors.

"They are very much in favor, especially in small- and medium-sized enterprise," Marinaro said.

Statistics from the Ministry of Commerce show that such investments totaled a record \$30 billion (195 billion yuan) last year, half of which was snapped up by 1,200 companies.

Marinaro says continued pressure on banks to maintain reserve requirements and governmental policies that limit domestic inflationary pressure have reduced the opportunities for many small- and medium-sized enterprises to raise funds through bank loans.

Private equity and venture capital make a quick and attractive alternative for small businesses eager to expand, Marinaro said.

"The expertise, experience, and business relationships involved in private equity and venture capital funds also can be invaluable resources for emerging enterprises," he said.

Despite his optimism, Marinaro said this financial strategy could in some instances be a mistake.

Even though Chinese enterprises have few financing options besides private equity, there are hidden ways for them to receive funds, such as international hot money and underground banks.

Marinaro said the financial crisis of 2009 and the lack of convertibility of the yuan have left a lot of cash on the sidelines that is being directed at emerging markets like China.

Second, overseas investors often don't know the proper way to go about starting a deal with a small- or medium-size enterprise on the mainland.

"What I have found to be different here is the way we approach the management level of a local company," he said.

Many of the deals – at least in that enterprise space – are centered on a put, redemption or share pledge mechanism, which Marinaro called it "operational put."

This operational put is actually a put option that requires a high return to the investors within a certain time. But China lacks the leverage mechanisms needed to decrease the potential risks of this approach.

The problem is that an operational put will encourage the wrong incentive, Marinaro said. If revenue targets are not met by a certain date, the investors' expected internal rate of return – usually quite high – could bankrupt the young company.

Marinaro said investors should reconsider the operational put approach, and perhaps replace it with an alternative approach to gain a competitive advantage.

# Pants or skirts?

By Zhao Hongyi

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) announced at the beginning of this year that female players must wear skirts rather than pants at international competitions. The decision was met with objections from many countries, including China.

The quarrel is only beginning.

BWF said the decision was made to promote badminton in this day and age's "eyeball economy," where appearances matter. Originally, the regulation was to be enacted starting May 1, with fines of \$250 (1,623 yuan) for those who fail to comply.

The federation named tennis, beach volleyball and figure skating – sports that are commercially successful – as models to follow.

But many countries' badminton federations – including some of the world's best, such as China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Denmark – objected.

Li Yongbo, head coach of China's national badminton team, complained in his blog that the dress code may become a distraction for players.

"I fully believe the federation is very professional in arranging competitions but very amateur in making this decision," Li wrote. "It has the right to recommend athletes dress a certain way, but not to force it upon them."

The athletes support their coach's view. "We wear pants during training, so it's inconvenient for us [to wear skirts in competition]," said Wang

Shixian, a top Chinese player. Many of Wang's teammates are afraid of being objectified.

"It's an abuse of human rights!" said Du Jing of China's national team, jokingly, at a press conference.

"It has never been the intention of the BWF to portray women as sex objects, nor is that what we are doing," BWF deputy president Paisan Rangsikitpho said in an official press release on the BWF website.

He said the federation collected views and feedback for the decision years ago, and that athletes can choose to wear pants inside their skirts.

"We'll impose a minimum length on the skirts but no maximum," said Darren Parks, events director of the federation.

But he added: "Of course, the skirts can't be too long, covering their knees – that would make them meaningless."

As a compromise, the federation postponed the implementation of the decision to June 14 this year. The rule will apply at the world championships in London from August 8 to 14 and the 2012 Olympic Games.

In the latest Badminton Asian Championship held in Chengdu, Sichuan Province in late April, most of the female athletes insisted on wearing pants in their competitions.

But coaches and athletes believe the final chance for female competitors to wear pants will be at the Sudirman Cup, to be held in late May and early June.



Chinese players believe the new rule may be a cause of distraction during games.

CFP Photo

## Comment

### Follow the market trend

*Today, if we want to further promote badminton worldwide, we must attract more spectators and TV viewers and obtain more sponsorships and money. Pants are fine, but skirts are better. New rules and decisions always meet resistance.*

— Rong Jie, salesman, Jiangsu Province

### Freedom to choose

*I cannot say the decision is good or bad. But the federation should*

*give the athletes the freedom to choose pants or skirts. Or it should give them a period of time to get used to the skirts – allow, for instance, pants and skirts to coexist.*

— Christopher Pattson, expat, Beijing

### Promote the sport

*We have other ways of obtaining funds to support the sport, like promoting it in the media and encouraging people to play it regularly as exercise. When more people play, the sport will have*

*more commercial appeal.*

— Wang Jun, professor, Peking University

### Unfair to some

*Skirts and bikinis are Western concepts. The federation did not take into account the culture of Asian countries when it made its decision. Athletes from the national teams of some countries are more conservative than others. Forcing them to dress a certain way is an abuse of their basic rights.*

— Yang Shanyu, engineer

# EU ban on Chinese herbal medicines

By Zhang Dongya

Traditional Chinese medicine has been banned from sale in European Union countries since May 1, following guidelines set by an EU directive passed in 2004.

Under the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive, all herbal medicinal products are required to obtain a certificate before entering the EU market. Some big pharmaceutical companies in Japan and South Korea have obtained the license, but not a single Chinese manufacturer has done so.

Prohibitive costs are a big obstacle. It's estimated that the cost of obtaining a license is about 1 million yuan per herb.

Beijing Tongrentong, an old medicine brand, said it gave up trying to get a license because of the price. It tried to apply through an agency, but that required 25 million yuan, including consulting fees and translation.

As a result, hundreds of Chinese herbal remedies are no longer being stocked on European shelves. Ayurvedic medicine, an

Indian traditional medicine, has also been removed.

Under the new requirements, traditional herbal medicines must also have a history of at least 30 years, including 15 years in EU regions. Chinese medicines again fall short: while they've been used for thousands of years in China, they've only recently been exported to Europe. Furthermore, the products are sold as "nutritious food" items, not medicine.

In China, traditional herbal medicine products are manufac-

tured after raw materials are ground into powder or cut into slices. The Japanese, on the other hand, have been using phytoextraction: by extracting the active ingredient, they can guarantee the quantitative efficacy in the medicine, Wang Jianguang, general manager of Weihe Pharma in Yunan Province, said.

A total of 350 species of herbal medicines have been licensed, including some plant medicine companies in Japan and South Korea.

China hopes the EU can push back the implementation date back to 2019.

Liu Zhanlin, vice chairman of the China Chamber of Commerce of Medicines and Health Products Importers and Exporters, recently said the EU's restriction on herbal medicines would disrupt the Chinese industry. There are about 100,000 people working in Chinese medicine in the EU, and a considerable number of them are Chinese. The new regulation may force many of them to find new careers.



The EU is limiting the distribution and sale of traditional medicines.

## Comment

### Ban directive will fail

*It is too early to say that traditional Chinese medicine has completely withdrawn from the European market. Chinese medicines and remedies have been widely accepted by foreigners in many countries. It will not lose its appeal just because it failed to obtain a license issued by the EU.*

— Wang Changsong, traditional medicine doctor, Zhongda Hospital Affiliated to Nanjing Southeast University

### Domestic oversight is important

*We should first strengthen the management of traditional medicines in the domestic market. Many cases of medicine trafficking have been reported in recent years. They have disgraced the name of traditional medicines, which have been passed on for thousands of years.*

— Liu Xinmin, pharmacist

### Reserve some rights to customers

*What about our freedom of choice? The EU and the greedy pharma industry only want to make more money. This law should not have been passed, as these herbal medicines have been around for thousands of years. I feel sorry for all those shops that will have to close, putting more people out of work.*

— Go4gold, netizen

# Playing from the heart

## American's fascination with imperial music leads to erhu performances

By Chu Meng

Janelle Smith, an American in her 60s and an auditor at the China Central Conservatory of Music, happened to be walking by Financial Street Community School one afternoon two years ago when the faint sounds of music seized her attention.

The melody seemed to flutter out of the imperial-style courtyard. Curious, Smith walked in and found a group of old women playing erhu.

"Surprisingly, I thought I could understand them," she said. "It sounded like a human voice, expressing all kinds of human emotions."

The musicians were part of the Beijing Imperial Court Musical Instrument Group, now consisting of about 30 members, and although Smith only had basic comprehension of both Chinese and music, she couldn't not join.

Since, she has practiced twice a week with the group.

"It was hard for me sometimes," she said. "But each time when I didn't understand what the director was saying, I simply stopped and listened to what the other members were playing."

"Music is a language. It helps me translate and interpret."

Smith calls the erhu a "two-



Janelle Smith (fourth from left)

Photo by Chu Meng

stringed Chinese violin" and said she likes it best out of all the traditional Chinese instruments, including the string guzheng, pipa and the dizi flute. She is now skilled enough to give formal performances.

Last Friday, the Beijing Imperial Court Musical Instrument

Group performed in front of a visiting Canadian choir. Smith, dressed in Qing-era red-and-gold imperial clothing, including embroidered shoes and a fan-shaped headgear, stood out with her blond hair.

"I love my look in this suit. It's beautiful," she said. "It's rarely

seen in other countries or even other Chinese cities. I am a Beijinger, and I think imperial culture is exclusive to Beijing."

Smith currently lives alone in an apartment near Xidan. She has a big family back home in the US, including three children and five grandchildren

who all love watching videos of her perform.

As for her next plans? Smith said she wants to learn the guqin, a seven-stringed instrument in the zither family.

And why not?

"Before, I was a tourist," she said. "But I'm a Beijinger now."

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# World eyes China's emerging tourism market

China's tourism market has entered a golden stage of development, with a record 60 million mainland tourists traveling overseas last year, according to a report released by the national tourism authority.

The rapidly growing number has made Chinese travelers the world's fourth-biggest spenders, behind travelers from Germany, the US and the UK.

As more mainland tourists are expected to spend money abroad this year, the world is turning its eyes to this burgeoning market and trying every effort to make themselves a go-to destination.

## New Beijing-Athens route to attract more Chinese tourists

By Han Manman

Air China inaugurated a new route linking China with Greece via Munich on Wednesday, positioning the Mediterranean country as Chinese tourists' next hot destination.

"China's overseas tourism is the fastest growing in the world. With the launch of the new route, we hope it can stimulate more Chinese tourism to Greece," said Theodore Georgakelos, Greece's ambassador to China.

Sixty million Chinese traveled abroad last year, according to the Chinese government, with only 20,000 bound for Greece. The number is also a very small percentage of the 41 million international tourists who went to Greece in 2009.

"Although the number isn't big, there was a 20 percent increase in Chinese tourists in 2010 compared to 2009," Georgakelos said.

The ambassador said China is a huge potential market for Greece. "We firmly believe long-distance tourism has a bright future in China, where the number of tourists is increasing rapidly, more rapidly than anywhere else," he said.

The tourism industry accounts for nearly a sixth of Greece's economy, according to Greek government statistics. Promoting the industry is more important now than ever, as the country is grappling with a debt of more than €300 billion (2.8 trillion yuan).

"The Greek financial crisis was a very serious and deep problem. The Greek government and Greek people are struggling

hard to fix this problem, and to ensure new economic development," the ambassador said, expressing optimism for the future.

Georgakelos said the Greek financial crisis may benefit tourists, who can take advantage of lower prices.

"Here's a small example: some fine coffee bars in downtown Athens are selling coffee at prices that are 20 percent lower this year," he said. "It's really wise to visit Greece during this time."

Georgakelos said many international tourists prefer to visit well-known sites such as Olympia and the islands of Crete and Santorini.

However, he most recommended lesser-known areas. He said when he was young, he loved to visit islands because they were romantic. He especially loved the islands in the western part of Greece for their beautiful scenery and nice vegetation.

Later, the ambassador's favorite place became the byzantine acropolis of Mystras, a nice and quiet town near the city of Kalamata.

"It is a Middle Age town with Middle-Age architecture," Georgakelos said. "You can see how Europe was 600 years ago. When walking in the street, you can imagine yourself there eight centuries ago. It's very impressive."

The ambassador said more flights between Greece and China will be launched in the near future.

"This new route is a very good start, but it is only a start," he said. "We may improve the service by creating more frequent flights, and later nonstop flights that



Theodore Georgakelos, Greek ambassador to China

Photo provided by the Greek embassy

require only 10 hours on the plane."

He did not specify when nonstop flights might become available.

"That all depends on whether our new flights are successful," he said. "I'm sure Chinese people will respond positively to what we offer."

The new route will be serviced by Airbus A330 planes, with two flights scheduled every week – on Wednesday and Saturday. The flights will take off at 12:40 am from Beijing and arrive in Athens at 10 am local time the next day.

## Australia prepares to receive more Chinese tourists

By Zhao Hongyi

Attendees of the Australia-China Tourism Summit, from June 7 to 9, will discuss topics like emerging trends, financial support, aviation and the development of both countries' tourism industries.

Representatives from the Australian and Chinese governments will meet with those in the tourism, aviation and financial industries. Panels and forums will be organized to discuss several issues, including technology, marketing and product development.

The host, Tourism Australia, will launch its 2020 China Strategic Plan during the event.

This isn't the first time Australia has tried promoting itself to Chinese tourists. During Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard's visit to Beijing in late April, Tourism Australia and the China National Tourism Administration signed a memorandum of understanding to "strengthen tourism cooperation."

The agreement will hopefully boost tourism and strengthen the links between the two countries. In addition, it will make it easier for Chinese travelers to obtain visas to visit Australia.

"China has been one of the most important sources of tourists to Australia," Andrew McEvoy, the newly appointed executive president of Tourism Australia, said at a press conference.

The number of Chinese tourists to Australia has quadrupled over the past decade, reaching 453,800 last year, a 24 percent increase over the previous year. Chinese tourists injected AU \$3 billion (20.7 billion yuan) to the country, an increase of 20 percent.

Tourism Australia hopes to increase its income from tourism to AU \$140 billion (966 billion yuan) by 2020.

"We're expecting Chinese tourists to play a critically important role in this process. They're expected to bring AU \$9.5 billion by then," McEvoy said.

## EU embassies open door to local youths

By Han Manman

Few in Beijing ever get the chance to visit a foreign embassy's office or ambassadors' residences. But this month, European Union embassies are making themselves available to Chinese residents.

As part of the 2011 EU-China Year of Youth, the Delegation of the European Union along with the embassies of 18 EU member states will open their embassy doors to locals, especially youths.

Starting last Friday, the month-long program involves a range of activities including lectures, visits to embassy offices and ambassadors' houses, cultural performances and games. A different embassy will host an event each day until June 3.

"Our purpose in launching EU Open Days is to strengthen young people's understanding and knowledge of the EU, its member states and EU-China relations, as well as to foster friendship and offer further occasions for people-to-people exchanges between European and Chinese youth," said Markus Ederer, ambassador of the EU Delegation to China.

He said the program is also a celebration to the 36th Anniversary of formal EU-China diplomatic relations.

While many of the events – called



EU ambassador Markus Ederer exchanges ideas with Chinese youth.

Photos provided by EU Delegation to China

"open days" – are by invitation only, the open days of the embassies Denmark, Italy and Poland will be for the general public.

On May 15, the Danish embassy will showcase two exhibitions about fairy tales and bicycle culture. Participants will have the unique opportunity to visit the Danish



The EU open days program is to strengthen young people's understanding of the EU and its member states.

anka," a tour of the embassy, Polish language lessons and a raffle.

On June 3, the Italian embassy will host two screenings of the Italian movie *Happy Family*, by the famous director Gabriele Salvatores with Chinese and Italian subtitles at the Italian Cultural Center.

2011 was first designated the "Year of Youth" by European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at the 12th EU-China Summit in Nanjing at the end of 2009. The framework includes a number of flagship events in the EU and China designed to foster intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation. It hopes to promote a platform for young people from Europe and China to meet and exchange ideas.

# Bookstore promotes city's amateur artists

By Xinji Letu

A bookstore near Nanluogu Xiang is giving amateur artists the exposure they seek: a unique exhibition recently opened showing work from non-professional artists, potentially giving them the opportunity to venture into a new career.

Book Tea is located in one of the hutong off Nanluogu Xiang. From oil paintings to watercolors, pop art to woodcarvings, the exhibition, *Alternative*, featuring 150 pieces from 17 artists, has something for everyone.

"Most of the artists are expats living in Beijing," said local curator Mao Lulu. "Although they come from different professional backgrounds, their pursuit of art is simple: they just love it."

Craig Kirk, a British IELTS examiner, is one of the exhibited artists. "I felt very lucky when two of my works were sold on the very first day of the exhibition. It is my first art exhibition," he said.

With a degree in animation, Kirk's work follows a bold, wryly funny cartoon style. In 2006, Kirk drew a picture for a bar in Houhai, and one year later, a man from a Hong Kong animation company saw it and hired him as an animation designer.

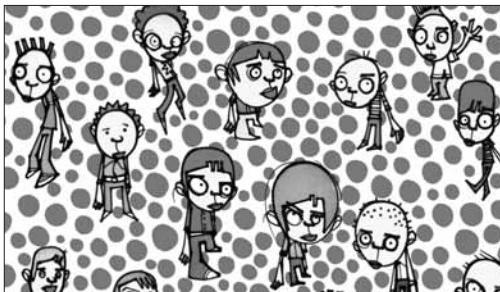
"The main purpose of the exhibition is to provide a platform to show these emerging artists' talents," Mao said.

Another artist, American Forest Bright, said, "I just want people to see my work."

He grew up in an artistic family and has been drawing for all but four years of his life. "Although painting is not my religion, it is a



The exhibition *Alternative* shown at Book Tea, a bookstore near Nanluogu Xiang



Craig Kirk's art

Photos provided by Book Tea

way for me to communicate with myself," Bright, 30, said.

Bright's watercolor paintings appear dreamy, quiet and childlike. As a kindergarten teacher, he

wants his paintings to tell stories about dreams. "I sort of like the feeling that anything can change in dreams," he said.

Mao hopes the exhibition

will help local artists' "dreams come true."

"What we do is more or less different from the mainstream," she said. "Nowadays, art collectors in China use ears instead of eyes to find art. In other words, they only focus on the possibility of value appreciation rather than the nature of art itself."

"We want to give people real art that can be kept in their houses instead of traded on the market."

She also hopes the bookstore can serve as a saloon where new artists can meet and communicate with one another.

"I am very happy that my work can be shown there, and I have made a lot of friends through the exhibition," Bright said.

## Event

### Aluss folk performance

Aluss Art Photography Space will use music to take you on a journey to China's far west. Listeners will be treated to a perfect blend of traditional sounds – horse-head fiddles, shamanic and African drums and throat-singing – with contemporary music. The venue features photography by Aluss and others.

When: May 14, 10 pm – 8 am next day

Where: Aluss Art Photography Space, 141 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 8400 2628

Cost: 50 yuan

### 798's affordable art sale

Get ready for the return of Beijing's most anticipated art event. Hundreds of contemporary art pieces, ranging from sculptures, paintings, photographs and prints, will be on display. Affordable artwork will be for sale starting from 200 yuan, with high-end pieces priced at 20,000 yuan.

When: May 14–15, 10 am – 6 pm

Where: 798 Dashanzi Art Zone, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Email:

info@affordableartbeijing.com

Cost: Free

### Hiking to Lily Village and Silver Pagodas

This weekend, take a relaxing walk through orchards and fields around Lily Village and visit the Silver Pagodas, a set of five well-preserved Buddhist pagodas that have a history of 300 years. A delicious lunch is also offered at a hot springs hotel.

When: May 15 (reservation required)

Where: Beijing Hikers, Xinhualian Ligang, Building 2, Suite 601, 26 Jiuxianqiao Zhonglu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6432 2786

Cost: 450 yuan for adults, 200 yuan for children under 12

### Chinese tea culture and tasting

For those who are curious about Chinese tea culture and history, don't miss the Chinese tea culture and tasting ceremony, conducted in an idyllic hutong courtyard. A talk will be given entirely in English. Among the things you'll learn are styles of tea pottery from different dynasties and brewing methods for various types of tea. You can also sample some of the very best teas grown in China.

When: Sunday every week, 3–5 pm

Where: Four Seasons Courtyard, 9 Qianmchang Hutong, Jiu Gulou Dajie, Xicheng District

Tel: 6405 7934

Cost: 150 yuan per person, free for children under 12

(by Wei Xi)

# One man's trash is another man's art

By Yao Weijie

Drap-Art, an international festival for recycling, held its first event in China on May 6 – Recycling Art Exhibition, which displayed the best artwork from the International Recycling Art Festival of Catalonia in Instituto Cervantes.

Drap-Art picked 34 prize-winning works created by 24 artists, all made from everyday disposable goods and garbage.

"Little Blue Hat" was one of the pieces: delicate beyond imagination, it's an installation made of a hodgepodge of items, including electric wire, a porcelain doll, fruit bag, various plastics, a plug, necklace, carpet, map, used books, marbles, gauze, glassware, bracelets, earphones and filters.

In "Venus," the artist integrated a CD box, coffee capsule, keyboard, battery, electric wire, copper and acrylic components into the face of Venus, the Roman goddess of love and beauty.

"We want to send the message to people that anyone can do art with almost everything. Just close your eyes and think: you can be creative and give used things a second life," said David

Ocon, head of the cultural department at Instituto Cervantes.

Drap-Art, founded in 1995 in Barcelona, has organized various exhibitions, art festivals and seminars during the past 15 years. It attracted global attention with its Creative & Recycling Art marathon, with 100 artists creating art from 100 cubic meters of waste in 24 consecutive hours.

"Drap-Art wants to promote its concept through the Recycling Art Exhibition," said Enrique Maldonado Roldan, head of international public relations of Instituto Cervantes. "In modern societies where the consumption of disposable products is leading to a growing reification of human beings, recycling art states the commitment against this problem and its numerous ramifications."

Developing a cross-cultural dialogue between China and Spain is another goal of this exhibition. Instituto Cervantes invited three Chinese artists – Bai Yiluo, Liu Guangyun and Sun Jiaxin, who have exhibited at Art Gate Gallery, Red Gate Gallery and EGG Gallery in Beijing – to display their works related to recycling.



Recycling Art Exhibition in Instituto Cervantes

Photo provided by Instituto Cervantes

The artists reused waste to create a series of pieces, including "Camouflage" – made of supermarket advertisement leaflets – and "Qipao," made of Ming and Qing Dynasty ceramics.

"In modern China, the phenomena of exposing the wealth and excessive consumption in some areas contrasts with the nation's frugality in the past. It is meaningful for artists to promote social awareness by their works,"

Ocon said. "We hope to survey the whole market and art concepts in China. Recently, China has overtaken Britain and the US as the world's largest art market."

In addition to the exhibition, Instituto Cervantes will hold recycling workshops for kids in early June.

The Recycling Art Exhibition will last until June 1 before moving to the Cervantes Library in Shanghai.

# IDs required to ride high-speed trains

By Yao Weijie

Starting June 1, IDs will be required to purchase high-speed tickets and must be shown before passengers are allowed to board.

People can book tickets using smart identity card readers, which have been installed in vendors at Beijing South Railway Station and ticketing offices around the city.

Besides second-generation ID cards, 24 other types of credentials, including military identification, driver's licenses and residence booklets, can be used to prove one's identity.

Foreigners can use their passport, residence permit, exit-entry permit, diplomats' card, consulate card or proof of identity issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

These documents, however, aren't recognizable by smart identity card machines, so foreigners must book tickets from designated booths.



The Beijing-to-Shanghai high-speed train will launch soon.

CFP Photo

"The Ministry of Railways is planning to sell tickets of high-speed train in advance online. Residents can book tickets at 12306.cn when the system is ready," said Yang Chunyan,

public relations officer at Beijing South Railway Station.

The railway ministry's plan is to eventually allow people to book train tickets as they would flights: selecting seats online, for example. More details will be given in

due time, Yang said.

Last week, Beijing adjusted its 20-day pre-sale period of train tickets to 10 days. That means tickets for China's high-speed trains will officially go on sale at 8 am on May 22.

## CBD lets users stay online at all times

By Xinji Letu

Lu Bin is a businessman – head of research and consulting at a multinational company – and for him, being able to stay online is crucial.

On Tuesday, he interviewed a job applicant at a restaurant in Sanlitun Village, and as soon as it was over, he emailed an evaluation back to his company's headquarters in Shanghai.

That's how business is done these days.

Whether waiting in line or waiting for a friend, the Internet can make time pass that much faster, especially with the proliferation of smart phone applications, social networking sites and online shopping. That's why people have so warmly greeted a central business district (CBD) plan to give people access to the Internet at all times in that area.

The trial phase of the project began on April 29. According to the CBD Administrative Committee, in public outdoor areas around CBD (about 3.9 square kilometers), anyone can enjoy free Internet access.

The network name is "CBD-WLAN." After connecting, users will be directed to the homepage of CBD Wireless Network. After entering one's cell phone number and a displayed code, a password will be texted to the user's phone.

Users are given four hours of free access.

For technical questions, call 6500 4387.

Although there are a growing number of free Wi-Fi hotspots in Beijing, 3G plans are the most reliable. "It appears more stable," said Yang Xinwei, a smart phone user.

For laptop users, there are two major 3G operators: China Unicom and China Telecom. A wireless Internet access card is required, and fees vary from 100 yuan to 2,180 yuan, with different monthly packages.

For smart phone users, China Mobile, China Unicom and China Telecom provide 3G service. Monthly charges vary from 28 yuan to 300 yuan.

For China Unicom information, visit 3g.10010.com or call 10010. For China Mobile, visit 10086.cn/brand/G3/ or call 10086. For China Telecom, visit c10000.com or call 10000.



Wi-Fi hotspots are becoming easier to find.

CFP Photo

## Subway darner finds online fame



Photo provided by Legal Mirrors

Fewer and fewer people are taking their worn clothes to be touched up these days, but that hasn't put Li Wenhai, a 40-something darning from Anhui Province, out of a job.

For 10 years, he has seated himself at the northeast gate of Andingmen subway station, mending clothes. Someone recently took a picture of him and posted some of his works online. Netizens commented, praising him for his work and reasonable prices.

Li's price starts from 20 yuan, but such is his skill that he's taken on complicated imported textiles for tens of thousands of yuan before. One can only guess what fortune his newfound publicity will bring.

(By Wei Ying)

## ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:  
weiyi@ynet.com

I'm wrapping up my two-month stay in China, but I want to see some kung fu and acrobatics shows before I return home. Can you tell me where and how I can get a ticket?

Visit [en.piao.com.cn/beijing/allticket.asp](http://en.piao.com.cn/beijing/allticket.asp) and scroll down to "acrobatics and magic show" or "folk art." Click on the price you want and then enter your personal information on the checkout page. Tickets will be delivered to your address and you can pay cash on delivery. There is also an English hotline (4006103721).

Is there a Par3 course somewhere near the central business district I can try as a beginner?

Try Chaoyang Kosaido Golf Club in Chaoyang Park, 9A Non-gzhan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District. It's not luxurious, but the courses are decent and affordable: 240 yuan on weekdays and 350 yuan on weekends. Three- and six-month discount packages are also available.

I'm planning a few places to go. If I want to book hotels online, where can I find the best deal?

The most popular websites are [elong.com](http://elong.com), [ctrip.com](http://ctrip.com) and [qunar.com](http://qunar.com), which all have both Chinese and English services. You can also try [booking.com](http://booking.com), but the accommodations it finds aren't cheap.

I know there are many fresh-buy sites in China, but I also heard that many of these deal du jour are of low quality. Can you recommend some trustworthy sites?

The biggest ones include [lashou.com](http://lashou.com) and [meituan.com](http://meituan.com). Dianpin.com, a leading dining review site is very strong in offering restaurant deals.

The last issue of *Beijing Today* reported on an ethical trade fair hosted by Brandnii charity shop. But when I got there, the shop owner said that there was no such fair.

We apologize for the mistake – the trade fair was only last year. However, it's always good to support Brandnii – at any time!

(By Wei Xi)



# Patti LuPone's love letter to the American theater

By Charles Zhu

When Patti LuPone, a leading American singer and actress, won the Tony award for her role as Rose in *Gypsy* in 2008, she said – in typical gum-chewing, New York humor – it was a wonderful gift to get one every 30 or so years.

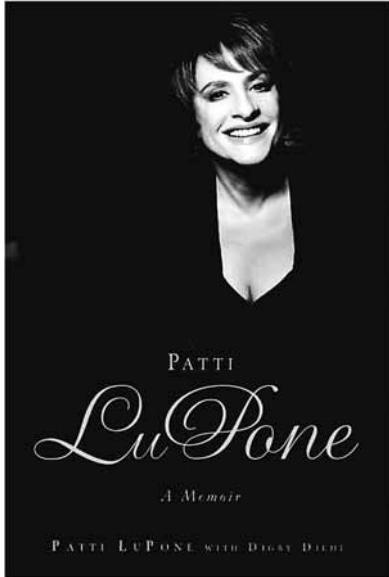
One of theater's most beloved ladies, LuPone lays it all bare in her memoir, *Patti LuPone: A Memoir*, telling the highs and lows of her life both onstage and off with the humor, candor and wit that are her habits of mind.

The legendary LuPone was born in Northport on Long Island, New York, to a librarian mother and a school administrator father. She began to show her talent at the age of 4 and quickly found herself destined for the stage. A prodigiously gifted child, she fought through 36 young actors chosen for the inaugural class of the Juilliard School's Drama Division.

The memoir recounts the heady days of her early 20s when she toured the country as a member of the classical repertory theatre ensemble, The Acting Company, to her early success on Broadway, her four-year stint as Libby Thacher on the television series *Life Goes On*, and her loving marriage to Matt Johnston, a cameraman.

The book contains nearly 100 photographs, including an eight-page four-color insert, and illustrious details about the life of a talented actor who played in musical theater roles including *Evita*, *Reno Sweeney*, *Mrs. Lovett* and *Momma Rose* in a long string of titles such as *Evita*, *Les Misérables*, *Anything Goes*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Gypsy*.

Patti was working on her first movie 1941, directed by Steven Spielberg, when she was summoned to New York for a



**Patti LuPone: A Memoir**  
By Patti LuPone, 336pp, Crown Archetype, \$25.99

final audition. At one point during the out-of-town try-outs for *Evita*, she was on the verge of being fired. Only an encouraging word from the critic Clive Barnes to the producer Robert Stigwood saved her from being sacked from one of the most important musicals of the day, a musical that brought her fame and glory overnight.

Though she won exceptional success with *Evita*, she said in a 2007 interview, "*Evita* was the worst experience of my life. I was screaming my way through a part that could only have been written by a man who hates

women. And I had no support from the producers, who wanted a star performance onstage but treated me as an unknown backstage. It was like Beirut, and I fought like a banshee."

Yet *Evita* catapulted her into a Broadway luminary. LuPone writes about her role as Eva Peron: "What many believe must have been a glorious ascent into heady stardom was, for me, a trial by fire, with the constant threat of being burned at the stake."

LuPone made a sensational sweep of the 2008 theater awards from the Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Actress in a musical for her performance as Rose in the critically acclaimed Broadway production of the classic musical *Gypsy*. LuPone was also the first American actor to win Britain's Olivier Award.

She writes in the book, "I have been incredibly fortunate over the course of my career to have been associated with some extraordinary dramatic and musical productions, and also some rather spectacular disasters. Looking back, I can find gifts and life lessons in every one."

There was an incident at the second to last performance of *Gypsy* on January 10, 2009. Disturbed by a man taking pictures with the use of flash, she stopped in the middle of "Rose's Turn" and demanded that he be driven out of the theater. "You heard the announcement in the beginning, you heard the announcement at intermission! Who do you think you are?" she shouted to him. After he was removed, LuPone restarted her number to the applause of the audience.

As one critic said, the memoir is ultimately a love letter to the American theater by a unique American artist.

## Tracing the sounds of the city

By He Jianwei

Germany is the epicenter of the electronic music scene with the world's top labels and clubs. From Flensburg in the north to Friedrichshafen in the south, many small but highly-specialized labels and clubs are scattered through numerous inconspicuous buildings.

The leading disc jockeys from North America, Japan, Australia and Europe all maintain close ties to Germany. Some found their first fame in Berlin's clubs, and others are smug about having had the chance to perform in the world's most celebrated electro venues.

In April, Goethe-Institut China and the Chinese culture and design studio ISreading Culture collaborated to edit *Travel with the Sound: German Electronic Music*, a history of the German electro scene.

Editors solicited contributions from top German DJs and artists, who introduced the latest trends and recent developments. They also helped select the top labels, clubs and festivals in the electronic music scene.

Few countries enjoy the stylistic diversity in electronic music seen in Germany, which freely fuses techno with elements of classical music, beat-free ambiance and hip-hop grooves.



**Travel with the Sound:  
German Electronic Music**  
Edited by Goethe-Institut China and ISreading Culture, 215pp, Shanghai People's Press, 38 yuan

UK dance magazine *DJ Mag* named Berlin's Berghain the world's best club in 2009.

"Seven of every 10 budget passengers flying to Berlin from other European countries on the weekend are headed for Berghain," said Zhang Youdai, a DJ and electronic critic.

The rise of electronic music has been closely tied to Germany's cultural, technological and economic development.

Tresor, an underground techno night-club and record label, is one symbol of this evolution.

Founded in 1991 in the cellar of a former Wertheim store in Mitte, East Berlin, Tresor represents the cutting edge of the electronic frontier.

After the reunion of Germany in the 1989, life changed in West Berlin. Many buildings in the center of East Berlin were abandoned and the former club closed because of financial problems.

*Travel with the Sound* is not only a book about electronic music, but also about Germany's past and present. Most of the architecture in the clubs keeps decorations from the 1980s, but they play avant-garde sound.

Killekill, a famed venue for downtempo and deep house grooves, still has a portrait hanging of the last leader of East Germany: Erich Honecker.

## Bookworm book listing

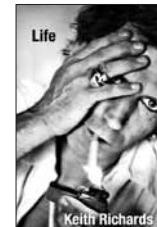
The Bookworm recommends the following bestsellers to *Beijing Today* readers.



**Decadence Mandchoue: The China Memoirs of Sir Edmund Trelawny Backhouse**

Edited by Derek Sandhaus, 336pp, Earnshaw Books, \$39.99

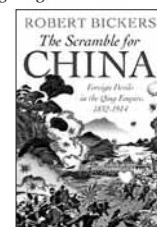
In 1898 a young Englishman walked into a homosexual brothel in Beijing and began a journey that he claims took him all the way to the bedchamber of imperial China's last great ruler, the Empress Dowager Cixi. Published for the first time, the controversial memoirs of Sinologist Sir Edmund Backhouse provide a unique and shocking glimpse into the hidden world of China's imperial palace, with its rampant corruption, grand conspiracies and uninhibited sexuality.



**Life**

By Keith Richards, 576pp, Back Bay Books, \$16.99

This autobiography is about the guitarist, songwriter, singer and founding member of the Rolling Stones, Keith Richards, who tells his story of life in the crossfire hurricane: listening obsessively to Chuck Berry and Muddy Waters records, learning guitar and forming a band with Mick Jagger and Brian Jones, the Rolling Stones' first fame and the notorious drug busts that led to his enduring image as an outlaw folk hero.



**The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832-1914**

By Robert Bickers, 512pp, Penguin Global, \$45

In the early 19th century, China remained almost untouched by Britain and other European powers – ferocious laws forbade all foreign trade outside one tiny area of Canton and anyone teaching a European to speak Chinese was executed. New technology began to unbalance this relationship and foreigners gathered like wolves around the weakening Qing Empire. (By He Jianwei)

# Mooks thrive in a post-iPad world

By Chu Meng

Mooks, a long-popular magazine-book hybrid, are making a comeback. Their resurgence may give Apple fans a reason to put down their digital iPads and return to the world of dead trees and ink.

But the new mook is a different animal from its predecessors. With glossy magazine pages and colorful photos, mooks offer a portable window into the worlds of fashion and subculture.

Mooks have a long history dating back to the 1950s in the US, but it was Japan that defined the medium in the 1990s.

These cultural products fused the fashion of magazines with the seriousness of the book. Each obsessed over a single subject, collecting enough various materials and literary works to fill 150 pages.

But that was then.

Since the mid-'90s, mooks have been less an assembly of literary criticism and more a compendium of fashion, art, design photography and subculture. These high-end artistic fashion mediums began to take China by storm last year.

Mooks provide more photographs than a book, but printed on magazine paper. Most are published bimonthly, quarterly or biannually.

Like a magazine, each issue hones in on a specific area of fashion, lifestyle, art or the latest social phenomenon. But unlike their larger cousins, mooks carry the ISBN code needed to track down issues long after publication.

Mooks eschew the superficial interviews and gossip of magazines for serious but timely information.

China saw its first new mook in the form of *Party*, a mook produced by Han Han, the notorious writer, blogger and racecar driver.

"Since *Party* was published last July, these new types of mooks have been seeping into the Chinese literature market," said Xie Qizhang, a book collector and literary critic.

Its first issue was devoted to the resentment of modern society's dark fringe and the isolation faced by authors; it had 14 pieces of visual art, nine brief essays, a poem and nine stories. The longest written piece was 11 pages.

The pages were rich with teen angst, presented in living color or in the slightly more transparent medium of memory. It also expressed a struggle for self-expression in the face of unsympathetic authorities and sexual frustration.

All 500,000 copies of the first issue of *Party* sold out four days after hitting the streets on July 6 of last year, Xie said.

Tianjin Chinese-World Books Company, the publishers, actually put the mook back into production to cope with demand.

"Coincidentally, it was the same week the first iPad began selling in China. That the mook had such popularity told me that people's love of traditional paper books was more alive than ever, as was their need for serious literature," Xie said.

Despite the booming start, Han Han announced on his microblog that the December issue of *Party* would be the last.

But as *Party* left, three new mooks rose up in its place: *Chutzpah!*, by Ou Ning, *Zui Found*, by Di'an, and *O-open*, edited by Annie Baobei.

These mooks are at the forefront of a new style of Chinese literature, leading academic circles to define it as the third most powerful medium for cultural publications, Xie said.

Indeed, world book publishers' profit reports still show that traditional paper books and magazines are holding strong despite the rise of e-reader devices and portable media.

And that trend carries over to mooks.

"The first 500,000 copies of the first edition of *Zui Found* sold out during the first weeks of April. We are preparing to start another print run," said Di'an, the mook's editor in chief.

Going in, Di'an never expected a paper literary product to be so popular today. The 30-year-old said almost a year of planning went into the mook's first issue.

"Some people say that young people today cannot write well; we disagree. Some say they fail to express profound emotional and spiritual needs in a modern setting; we disagree. Others say the true spirit of literature is already dead in this materialistic, impatient and pragmatic generation; we disagree," she said.

She hopes that the new success of mooks will give young writers a vehicle to tell the stories their naysayers claim they can't.

**"That the mook had such popularity told me that people's love of traditional paper books was more alive than ever, as was their need for serious literature."**



## China's top mooks



### Chutzpah!

Bimonthly, 260 page, 25 yuan  
Edited by Ou Ning



### Zui Found,

Bimonthly, 123 page, 18 yuan  
Edited by Guo Jingming and Di'an



*Zui Found* is focused on serious literary works. Each issue is themed on a current social issue. It emphasizes appreciation of new literature by presenting sharp topics, acute debates, sensational photographs and an aesthetic page arrangement.



### NEWriting

Bimonthly, 187 page, 25 yuan  
Edited by Zhang Yueran

This mook is for people who love literature and modern art. It hires the best novelists, columnists, reviewers and stylists to fill its slick pages with spectacular novels, dreamy photographs, gorgeous drawings and challenging ideas.

It combines literature, art, design, music, movies and contemporary culture in a whimsical mix that makes reading it feel like a late-night chat with an old friend.



### O-open

Quarterly, 208 page, 25 yuan  
Edited by Annie Baobei

Annie Baobei's mook makes an obvious nod to its Japanese predecessors in artistic design and content. It features long interviews with masters of world literature.

The first half of its inaugural edition was devoted to a lengthy interview with Haruki Murakami. The interview, conducted over the course of three days in May 2010 by Matsue Masashi, first appeared in the summer 2010 issue of Kangaeru Hito.

Accompanying the interview was a *1Q84*-inspired trip through Tokyo courtesy of Peggy Kuo, the author of a book of photo-essays about the Tokyo locations featured in Murakami's fiction.



# Finding local designer brands at glow-ing.com



Vintage lace handbag from Maryjo, 498 yuan



Swing gold skirt from MS. Min, 800 yuan

By Annie Wei

For those who like trendy products from local independent young designers, glow-ing.com is the site to check out: items are displayed prominently, with prices – all reasonable – clearly labeled.

As summer approaches, we recommend the 1960s ladylike look from MS. Min (600 to 1,200 yuan) and her candy-colored dresses (800 yuan), the 1970s bobo-style dress from t.b.a (1,500 yuan), necklaces from Chows (230 to 700 yuan) and lace accessories from Maryjo (498 yuan).

The site features products from more than 30 designers, a number that is steadily increasing. Susie Cao, the site's Beijing manager, said they prefer brands with high-end style featuring detailed designs as opposed to trendy ones. A simple T-shirt with a brand's logo is not glow-ing.com's MO.

Cao said that brands sold through glow-ing.com must be approved by the team, which relies on the advice of close friends.

"The style we choose is important and consistent with our store's positioning," she said. Glow-ing.com sees itself as an independent, artsy store – the sort of creative shop one might find on Nanluogu Xiang.

The site prefers ready-to-wear clothes that require small-scale production.

Last year, Cao and company spent six months studying various websites before developing their own. In October, the team began a five-month process of talking with designers. The site launched in March of this year.

Unlike traditional sites that buy products from brands or designers, glow-ing.com uses a consumer-to-business model that lets designers upload their own product images and manage their own orders.

"For designers, it's like using Taobao; for consumers, it's like shopping in an online mall," Cao said.

Within a few months, glow-ing.com had customers from across China. Cao said customers from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces – including Shanghai – tend to shop for clothes that are promoted through microblogs; customers from Beijing and Guangzhou prefer lesser known styles and brands; the rest prefer what is promoted on the site's front page.

Cao said the team has a lot of ideas, such as launching online magazines and hosting promotional events, but is waiting to move ahead on them until the site expands.

The site also has men's wear with brands like CODPIECE, Chi Zhang, INSH, The THING and Triple-Major.



Qing dynasty-style Baroque dress from MS. Min, 728 yuan



Fringe flapper silk dress from t.b.a, 1,600 yuan



Necklace from Chows, starting from 229 yuan



Evening dress from Li Hong Yan, 3,980 yuan



Bow neck printed floral smock dress from t.b.a, 1,650 yuan

Photos provided by glow-ing.com

# Market-to-table menu by Michelin chef

By Annie Wei

*Beijing Today* visited local markets this week with Michelin chef Eros Piccos from Italy, who gave us some advice and recipes to share.

Picos was invited by Renaissance Beijing Capital Hotel to be the guest chef. He began this past Wednesday and will stay until next Sunday.

Like four- and five-star restaurants, Renaissance Beijing Hotel uses many food suppliers, but its chefs also use their own organic suppliers from local farmers and enjoy visiting markets at least once or twice a week.

For chefs, the market is very important. "It's the place to look for seasonal products," said Picos, whose specialty is incorporating traditional Italian recipes into his dishes. He's deeply aware of ingredient quality and prefers highlighting a food's original flavors with attention to detail.

Picos also has experience living and working in France. As Julia Child wrote in *My Life in France*: "The local market is where one finds the best seasonal vegetables ... how to select the best potatoes, which part tastes the best, when to eat what and how to cook them."

The markets we visited were two leading wholesale markets: Jinshan Seafood Market and Xinfadia Vegetable Market.

With ingredients in hand, Picos showed us a simple seasonal dish prepared in the traditional Italian way.



## DIY recipes of lobster, scallop, peaches, pork and ice cream



### Slightly cooked sea mussels with breadcrumbs

One can get fat sea mussels at Jinshan market, transported from North Korea or Dalian. There are two kinds of mussels. The river mussels are triangular, costing 3 yuan each; big sea mussels start from 35 yuan per 500 grams.

1. Clean the mussels. Take the scallop out and keep one shell each. (Chef's tip: normally, for small mussels, you can keep its red row and skirt; in big mussels, however, they don't taste well.)

2. Spread some black pepper on the scallop and top each with breadcrumbs. The breadcrumbs should be mixed with grounded basil, garlic, pine nut and Parmesan cheese.

3. Grill them half raw.

The scallop should be fat and raw inside, with a texture like sashimi, but it will have a natural sweet taste. Picos said it a traditional Italian flavor. Best served with a glass of white wine on a rooftop or terrace.



### Lobster with sliced snow peas

Lobster is available in many markets, though not at Jinshan. One can find quality lobster at Sanyuanli market or Dongjiao Market as well. (Chef's tip: go for the most active ones, as they are the freshest – though more expensive.)

The one we bought from Jinshan market was around 230 yuan per 500 grams. A big one is around 2 kilograms.

1. Place big lobsters in boiling water for less than 5 minutes; for small lobsters, a little more than 3 minutes is enough.

2. Soak them in a bucket of iced water and knife them into thin pieces.

3. Prepare the sauce – vanilla seeds, lemon juice, mustard and olive oil – and spread it over the lobster.

4. Place them on top of sliced and cooked snow peas and garnish the plate.

5. Apply the sauce again.

Picos said he once read an old recipe book that said vanilla makes lobster and shrimp taste great. The dish has a great strong vanilla smell, and the lobster is fresh and chewy.



### Peach with pork and purple potato

Now is the perfect season for peaches: fresh ones go for about 7 yuan per kilogram. Purple potatoes can be found at local markets and star at 8 yuan per kilogram.

Peel the peach and soak in syrup overnight. Place it over grilled or mashed potatoes and serve with pork chops.

### Vanilla ice cream with coffee and chocolate

Picos said this is a traditional family dessert that he learned from his grandma. Mix freshly brewed espresso with chocolate and spread it around the ice cream.



Photos by Bill Yin/Sun Xiaoping

### Markets

We suggest downtown markets like Dongjiao if you're not shopping in bulk.

#### Dongjiao Market

Where: 12 Xidawang Lu, Chaoyang District  
Open: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

#### Jinshan Seafood market

Where: 232, Shilouzhuang Xi Jie, at the crossroad of Guangcui Lu and Jinding Lu, Fengtai District  
Open: 7 am – 8 pm  
Tel: 5122 8988  
Web site: jshxsc.com

We suggest consumers take a pair of rain boots because water is everywhere.

#### Tianyu Market

Where: Yaojiayuan Lu, near east gate of Tuanjiehun Park, Chaoyang District  
Open: 8 am – 6 pm

### How to select seafood and vegetables:

1. White asparagus: not too thick or thin. If the asparagus is too thick, it will taste old; if too thin, nothing will be left after peeling.

2. Water quality affects the crab's taste. You can tell what kind of water a crab lives in by its shell color. If the color is too dark, the water is normally not good. Gray crabs are preferred.

3. Pat open mussel shells. Live mussels will close their shells – they're the ones to pick.

### Michelin chef at Renaissance Beijing Capital Hotel

Until May 22, Michelin one-star chef Eros Picos will present his dishes at Fratellifresh, Renaissance Beijing Capital Hotel.

This is Picos' first visit to China. He will host a Michelin-inspired gala wine dinner on May 20 and teach a cooking class on May 18.

Where: Fratellifresh, 1st Floor, 61 Dongsanhuan Middle Road, Chaoyang District

Tel: 5863 8203  
Open: 11 am – 2:30 pm, 5-9 pm

# The enigma of the Sphinx lives on

By He Jianwei

In Greek mythology, the Sphinx was a creature with the head and breast of a woman, the haunches of a lion and wings of a bird. She sat outside the city of Thebes and asked a riddle of all passersby: which creature goes on four legs in the morning, two at noon and three in the evening?

The young Greek artist Marianna Ignatiki's first solo exhibition in Beijing, entitled *Sphinx*, opened last month, and much to form, the works are all riddles. She paints fragmented body parts, masks and jewelry, a collage representing the puzzle of life.

In one of her color pencil sketches, a Sphinx-like creature is hermaphroditic: the upper half of its body is a man and woman with locked lips.

She draws Siamese twin sisters in another painting. "The union of two bodies in one shows that they complement each other, but at the same time, they always clash with each other," said Meng Jin, the exhibition's curator.

Born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1977, Ignatiki has long been obsessed with black surre-



alism. "Her magnificent and glamorous creatures oddly emerge in absurd scenes, beautiful and yet cold and bizarre," Meng said.

Ignatiki creates an eccentric atmosphere, flirting with gothic aesthetics and combining themes such as life and death, love and passion.

"These paintings look so beautiful, yet they are too dark. We face the idea of a fleshy eroticism, of a spooky lust, hidden behind the mask of beauty," said Areti Leopoulos, art historian and curator of the Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki.

"And there also lies the riddle of those sphinx-like creatures, an enigma whose answer is hiding just under our nose – the Sphinx is nothing else but the human soul."

## Sphinx – Marianna Ignatiki Solo Exhibition

Where: FakeSpace (near Today Art Museum), 22 Art Plaza, 32

Baizhuwan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 22, daily except Monday, 1-6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5826 4512

## Upcoming

### Nightlife

#### Burns Retro Night

The Flying Mantas, CLAMPS, Purple Smog and The Beijing Beatles bring you a truly cool and vintage night.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou

Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: May 19, 8 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door

Tel: 6402 5080

## Stage in June

### Concert

#### Anuna Ireland National Choir

Where: Poly Theater, 14

Dongzhimen Nan Dajie,

Dongcheng District

When: June 14, 7:30 pm

Admission: 120-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

#### Dresden Philharmonic

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 18, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-880 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### Jean-Efflam Bavouzet Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: June 28, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-580 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

#### Lucerne Symphony Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 28-29, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-880 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### Dance

#### Haze presented by Beijing Dance Theater

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 17-18, 7:30 pm

Admission: 160-240 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### Drama

#### The Yellow Storm

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 3-12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### Soft

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: June 21-26, 7:30 pm

Admission: 150-580 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

#### Opera

#### The Bat

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 3-6, 7:30 pm

Admission: 160-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

## 5 Friday, May 13

### Exhibition

#### Zhao Hongchen Solo Exhibition

Poet and artist Zhao Hongchen estab-

lished a new type of art form, "sketch painting." This exhibition shows the form's core: simplicity and thoroughness.

Where: Hong Kong Art Museum, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 29, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9217

#### Movie

#### 13 m2 (2007)

After their armored vehicle, full of cash, is attacked, Jose and his two best friends are forced into hiding in a 13-square-meter bunker. Their friendship is tested, their motivations questioned, and every move triggers only more paranoia.

Where: French Cultural Center, 1/F, Guangcui International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 6553 2627

#### Nightlife

#### ChuanZi

Folk singer ChuanZi releases his new album, *I Want to Marry*, this Friday.

Where: Tango Club, 3/F, 79 Hepingli Xi Jie, Chaoyang District

When: 8:30 pm

Admission: 100 yuan

advance purchase, 120 yuan at the door

Tel: 6428 2288



## Sunday, May 15

### Nightlife

#### College Rock Band Union



Five college rock bands – Joe's Heart, Heart-shaped Box, Flaxen

Wheat, Red Eyes and Wolf Rivers – rock out.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door

Tel: 6402 5080

#### Movie

#### Dam Street (2005)

This film tells the story of Xiaoyun, a 16-year-old girl who discovers that she's pregnant, to the shock of her family and community. She's expelled, her boy-

## Saturday, May 14

### Nightlife

#### Exhibition

#### KDK Solo

#### Exhibition

This exhibition is the first solo show of Jing Dujun, also known as KDK. Some of his works have been collected by Samsung Leeum Museum and Swiss modern architect Mario Botta.

Where: MK2 Art Space, 255 Caohangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 29, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6431 1567

#### Nightlife



#### Your Guitar My Journey

Liu Siwu refers to himself as a city music traveler, using music to express real feelings in daily life.

Where: Tiny Salt, north tower of SOHO Shangdu, 8

Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 50 yuan

advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door

Tel: 5900 0969

#### Movie

#### Birdy (1984)

Birdy, who returns from Vietnam mentally shattered, deluded into thinking he is a bird, checks into a military hospital. His best friend Al, also a wounded Vietnam vet, visits Birdy every day, determined to bring him back to reality.

Where: MoBox Books Life, 288 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 6:30 pm

Admission: Spend at least 10 yuan on a drink

Tel: 8261 8538



Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8001

#### Exhibition

#### Beatlemania • Frommirrrorixp

This group exhibition shows 100 photographs of the Beatles, highlighting great moments both on stage and behind the scenes.

Where: Thread Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 31, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: free

Tel: 5978 9667

(By Xinji Letu)

# BUi fU·k Uhg·hc ·dfchYWh nci f··lj Yf

## Disease trending younger

Song Hao, 26, a public relations manager, was told he had a fatty liver caused by excessive alcohol consumption during a health check-up last month. At the time, Song, a 177-centimeter-tall man, weighed 150 kilograms. He has lost 5 kilograms since learning of his condition at the start of the month.

"Learning that I developed this disease put a strain on my mind. I really thought I was too young to suffer from this," he said.

Taking his weight loss to be a sign of the ailment's progression only intensified that stress.

Song said his excessive drinking was job-related. "I thought my body could hold up under the pressure since I was young," the Mongolian said. But a new physical examination convinced him to change his lifestyle.

He now begins his mornings with a healthy breakfast that includes fruit and some exercise. He is also taking levothyroxine, a drug used to treat hyperthyroidism, to help rein in his weight.

But after several weeks on the pill, he found himself still shedding weight.

"It's driving me nuts," he said. "Now I just pray every day that I'll still have a chance to turn my condition around with diet and exercise."

Fatty liver, just as its name implies, is the excessive accumulation of fat in liver cells. The disease is classified in three stages depending on severity: simple fatty liver, fatty hepatitis and fatty liver cirrhosis.

Alcoholic fatty liver, caused by excessive alcohol intake, and non-alcoholic fatty liver are two of the most common diseases. Both have been linked to obesity, diabetes and dyslipidemia, an accumulation of fat in the blood.

"We are seeing more people with this condition each year, and the patients are getting younger," said Liu Wen, a gastroenterologist at Beijing Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Among obese people, the incidence of the disease is as high as 50 percent: most are men between the ages of 30 and 60.

According to statistics recorded by the Shanghai Health Bureau, more than 47 percent of obese school students have already developed non-alcoholic fatty liver.

## Herbal treatments

### 1. Southern ginseng

Southern ginseng is an herb used extensively throughout Chinese medicine as a treatment for fatty liver. It reduces cholesterol and blood coagulation, increases energy, helps healthy cell development and protects the liver with its antioxidants.

In a study conducted at Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in Taiwan, southern ginseng supplements were demonstrated to help patients combat non-alcoholic fatty liver. Research found that patients who consumed a daily dose of 80 milliliters per day could reduce liver enzyme levels and increase insulin resistance.

### 2. Milk thistle

Silymarin is the active ingredient of the herb milk thistle. It has long been used to boost liver health. Milk thistle can increase the speed of liver cell regeneration, restrain liver fibrosis, protect the liver from injury and decrease cholesterol absorption.

Milk thistle extract is proved to decrease cholesterol absorption with high cholesterol diets and to reduce low-density lipoprotein and triglycerides. By interfering with cholesterol absorption it fights the accumulation of fats in the liver.

### 3. Linseed

Linseed, which is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, is one of the most common natural cures available.

Linseed can reduce fluctuations in heart health,



CFP Photo

improve the efficacy of insulin, decrease inflammation and aid people who suffer from dysfunctions of the central nervous system.

Many animal trials indicate that a diet rich in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids, those found in fish such as salmon, can reduce the amount of liver fat — especially in cases of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

Previous research found that linseed reduced liver enzyme levels, balanced blood fat ratios and improved liver texture.

**By Li Zhixin**

A healthy liver can be a source of great energy and well-being: a poor-functioning liver can leave you tired and suffering from headache, bad breath, allergies, acne and weight fluctuations.

## Foods that can nourish the liver

Foods that are good for the liver fall into two main categories: those that assist in detoxification and those high in protective antioxidants.

Eating foods that help the liver can be a basic way to improve and support your liver during recovery. Below are some foods that are considered to be good for liver:

### 1. High-antioxidant fruits

Fruits like prunes, raisins, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, plums, oranges, pink grapefruit, cantaloupe, apples and pears have high levels of antioxidants that protect the liver from free radicals produced during detoxification.

### 2. Garlic and onions

Garlic and onions contain allicin, which is a sulphur-based compound needed by the liver for effective detoxification. Garlic helps the liver rid the body of mercury, certain food additives and the hormone oestrogen.

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and cabbage are also powerful detoxifiers of the liver. They contain chemicals that neutralize certain toxins such as nitrosamines found in cigarette smoke and aflatoxin found in peanuts. They also contain glucosinolates that help the liver to produce the enzymes it needs for detoxification.

### 3. Leafy greens

The bitterness of foods like dandelion, chicory and endive can help to stimulate bile flow within the liver. One of the jobs of bile is to remove toxins through the bowel, as well as those unfriendly micro-organisms.

### 4. Beets

Beets are like a blood-purifying tonic that is also capable of absorbing heavy metals.

### 5. Fresh lemon juice

Drinking freshly squeezed lemon juice in a cup of boiled water first thing in the morning helps cleanse the liver and promote detoxification. It also stimulates bile production, cleanses the stomach and bowel and stimulates bowel movement.

## Tips

1. Avoid or limit consumption of alcohol and recreational drugs.
2. Avoid toxic substances such as pesticides, solvents and paint thinners.
3. Get regular health check-ups, including liver function tests.
4. Get regular and moderate exercise.
5. Drink plenty of water.
6. Be careful when using drugs and herbs in combination, and take no more than the recommended dosage of each.
7. Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.

# A stroll through living history at Cuandixia

By Anthony Tao

Known for its Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) architecture, Cuandixia, located 90 kilometers west of Beijing's urban center, is one of the oldest, best-preserved and loveliest villages in the country.

It is situated in a mountainous basin, with pavilions dotting the surrounding hills and manmade terraces carved into the slopes. A relatively easy hike will take you to one of several scenic spots, where one can look down and frame the entire village inside a camera's viewfinder.

At ground level, walk through the maze of narrow lanes and alleys, wander into courtyards and eat inside villagers' homes (Cuandixia gives new meaning to the term "home-style restaurant"). The village has undergone much redevelopment, but it's managed to retain its essence: that feeling of a bygone time.



The character "Cuan" means earthen cooking stove.

Despite the media attention – the listings in *Lonely Planet* and major travel sites like CNNGo – and its status as a UNESCO Heritage Site, Cuandixia remains a quaint historical hamlet where prices have not inflated and the people have not changed – only modernized.

The owner of one of the restaurants and home inns – almost all the houses at Cuandixia serve these dual purposes: serving food and providing lodging – picks up an iPhone between answering my questions. "Renovations and development here began in 1994. And in 1997, a Japanese newspaper did a front-page story about the village ..."

Since then, while development hasn't been at Beijing's breakneck pace, the village has added modern amenities without losing its historic aesthetic: that element that keeps people coming back.

And back they come. If anything, says the owner, "There are too many people now."

But Cuandixia's charms make up for the infusion of tourists. Walk into any home – with some doubling as stores that sell souvenirs and trinkets – and one is liable to see framed photos of the village, maps and ink and wash paintings, and shards of painted rocks.

Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) artifacts are abundant, such as ornately carved furniture.

The homes at Cuandixia are set up as small traditional court-yards: a main door leads into a common area, and on each of three sides is a room. Some families have converted their space into shops, while others rent out their rooms to travelers.

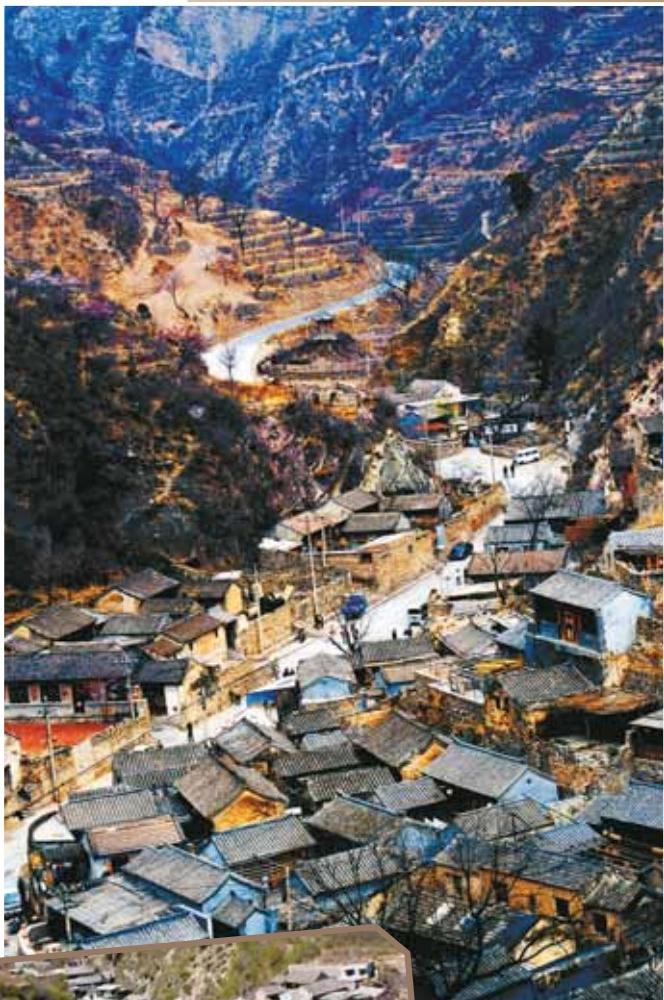
The sight of flyswatters and underwear hanging from clothes-lines reinforces the idea that people – real people – live here, and have lived here for a very long time.

## Then and now

Cuandixia was established about 500 years ago and planned according to fengshui principles: the houses all face south, with officials' and noblemen's houses situated closer to the top. The architecture is classically Ming: with walls enclosing more walls (think Forbidden City) and houses with sloped roofs.

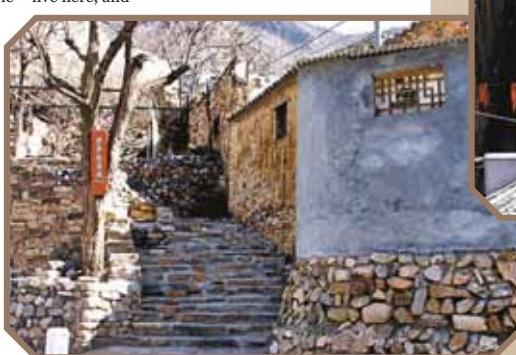
The first settlers were part of an extended family from Shanxi Province, surnamed Han. As the story goes, instead of naming the village Han – a homonym for "cold" – the villagers chose the name "Cuan," a complex character that means "earthen cooking stove." Fittingly, the character for "fire" makes up the base of Cuan.

*Continued on page 21...*



Manmade terraces have been carved into the surrounding hills and mountains.

CFP Photo



Many homes act as both home inns and family restaurants in the village. Photos by Kevin Reitz



Photo by Kevin Reitz

One of the village's many narrow alleyways  
CFP Photo

Gray-shingled roofs are a distinctive feature of this Ming Dynasty hamlet.

Photo by Kevin Reitz



A villager roasts rabbit meat in Cuandixia.

Photo by Kevin Reitz



CFP Photo

*...continued from page 20*

Upon entering Cuandixia, the first sight to see is the Guandi Temple, which commemorates the hero Guan Yu from the Three Kingdoms Period (220-280). Looking west from here, one can easily mistake the village as a prelude to the real thing. Alas, it really is this compact: just 5.33 square kilometers.

About 70 courtyards are located here. The restaurant at courtyard No. 18 – Gufengyuan – always seems to be busy, but around lunchtime, it's not hard finding a place to eat. The smell of home cooking permeates the air.

The village is enclosed by jagged mountains that imaginative minds have taken to giving creative names. Signs read: "Fierce Tiger in the Mountain," "Auspicious Bats," "Golden Toad Watching the Moon" and "Divine Turtle Whistling to the Sky."

### Places of interest

Walk along Historic Plank Road and check out the market, where Old Beijing snacks are sold at reasonable prices.

Starting next month and throughout the summer, the market will carry fresh honey collected from bees raised in the village. The honey that's sold now is what's leftover from the previous season.

One shop in particular that may be worth checking out is Ancient Doll (13910968068, sgdoll@126.com), owned by Yan Xiaoni, vice chairman of the Association of Arts and Crafts of Guizhou Province, whose "ethnic dolls" have won numerous national awards.

Visitors who have a day to spare will want to spend the night. In the evenings, nothing is more relaxing than sitting on a veranda and drinking a beer, savoring the tranquility of the herdsman's life.

Two trails wind away from the village. One of them goes north, behind the village. It's the longer of the trails, worthy of exploration if one has some time.

But the recommended trail and the more popular of the two is the southern trail that points toward Goddess Temple. About halfway up, hikers are treated to the money shot: the village's south face, with all its embankments, tan-colored walls and dust-gray shingled rooftops.

About three-fourths of the way to the trail's end, one can peer down and see every household in distinct outline. Everything reveals itself to the viewer, no maps necessary.

### Cuandixia Village

Where: Zhaitang Town, Mentougou District

Admission: 35 yuan

Website: cuandixia.com

Email: cdx@cuandixia.com

Tel: 6981 9333

#### Getting there:

From Fuchengmen on Second Ring Road, take State Highway 108 west toward Mengtougou/Xiliuhuan Bei Lu (Sixth Ring Road North). Go along Sixth Ring Road for 12 kilometers until you reach State Highway 109. Take that highway about 57 kilometers and exit at Cuandixia.

Or take subway line 1 to Pingguoyuan station and hire a car or minibus (100 to 150 yuan). Or take Bus 929-zhi from Pingguoyuan to the Zhaitang Town stop and taxi from there for 10 to 15 yuan. At 7:30 am and 12:30 pm, the bus goes all the way from Pingguoyuan to the village, and makes return trips at 10 am and 3 pm.

#### Food and accommodations:

Just about every household has a bed for rent, such as Han's family house (13180576603). Prices start from 50 yuan per person. Lunch and dinner run about 30 yuan per person.

## Dining



### Sunday family lunch

The Regent is offering a true Italian feast on Sundays at Daccapo. Award-winning chef Mario and his team are preparing family lunches sure to excite, impress and satisfy.

Where: Daccapo, The Regent Beijing, 99 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Every Sunday, 11:30 am – 2 pm

Cost: Antipasto, appetizer and dessert buffet 178 yuan (includes main course, cheese selection, desserts and free Prosecco, 15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 8522 1789

carte menus at Grange and Zen5es plus nice rib buffets at Seasonal Tastes give rib lovers abundant choices. Put your diet plans aside and join us for a great experience of ribs and bibs!

Where: Seasonal Tastes, Grange, and Zen5es, Westin Beijing Chaoyang, 1 Xinyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 31, 5:30-10:30 pm (Seasonal Tastes & Zen5es); 5:30-11:00 pm (Grange)  
Tel: 5922 8880



### Bar and Grill happy hour

Come to the Regent's Bar & Grill any day between 4 and 8 pm to enjoy select local and imported beers, cocktails, house spirits, imported wines, juices and soft drinks, all half off.

There's no better way to relax and unwind after a hard day of work, shopping or touring.

Where: Bar & Grill, The Regent Beijing, 99 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Everyday, 4-8 pm  
Tel: 8522 1789



### Ribs and ribs at the Westin Beijing

Come and enjoy a culinary tour of ribs at the Westin Beijing Chaoyang. The grand a la

### Special Asian lunch at Hopfenstube

Indulge in savory Asian cuisine for lunch. All "Taste of Asia" items are 58 yuan and include a soup of the day. The package is available from Monday to Friday every week.

Where: Hopfenstube, Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U Town, 3 Sanfeng North Area, Chaoyang District

When: Monday – Friday  
Cost: 58 yuan  
Tel: 5909 6683



### Mango Mania in May

Coming soon, the Mango Mania in May! A taste explosion of mangoes in fabulously delicious cakes, puddings, crispy cubes, chocolate tarts, cheesecake, milkshakes, dessert platters and of course, our signature chilled mango and sweet pomello soup. It's all Mango, all May! Don't miss this fruity sensation! Mangoes, that wonderful sweet, healthy fruit, filled with vitamins C and A and dietary fiber, is the King of Tropical Fruits, and beloved by the public.

Where: Grand Millennium Hotel, Fortune Plaza, 7 Dongsanhu Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: May  
Tel: 8587 6888

## Hotel

### Grand Millennium Hotel gets new general manager

Gino Tan began his role as the new general manager of Grand Millennium Beijing on April 25.

Tan, a Singaporean, is a graduate of the University of London with BSC in Economics (Hons), a member of the Cornell General Manager alumni and a key member of the Singapore Chamber of Commerce in China. Tan is fluent in English, Chinese, Malay and many Chinese dialects.

Tan brings with him a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the hospitality industry. With his strong leadership, vision and knowledge of hotels, the Grand Millennium Beijing is becoming Beijing's premier 5-star hotel. The hotel is committed to exceptional customer service in providing outstanding guest experiences and a contemporary lodging at one of the most envied locations in the central business district.

### Shang Junior children's club at Shangri-La Hotel

Come by to this paradise where children can learn, play and have fun. Shang Junior offers an array of special activities for children each month, from cooking classes that teach sushi and cookies to interactive educational activities. The hotel also has a children's playroom with a variety of safe entertainment facilities.

The area opens on Children's Day with a part in the hotel's landscaped garden. Children between the ages of 3 and 12 will take center stage at the event.

The "theme painting exhibition" at the inaugural party lets your child join in the magical world of painting. They can use their own creativity to put their happiest memories on paper.

Kids signing up at "Shang Junior" will also be able to enjoy multiple surprises. In addition to a welcome pack stuffed with Shang Junior T-shirts, bags, hats and teddy bears, they are also entitled to three free member activities.

Where: Shangri-La Beijing, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: June 1  
Tel: 8882 6989

## Training

### Muay Thai Training – Beijing

Glee Gym provides training in muay Thai, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, mixed martial arts and power yoga. Coaches are world champions with brains and brawn. They won't sweet-talk you: you really can master what you want to learn.

Glee Gym is only open to small classes of three to five people. It provides not only the best pricing, but also the most professional teaching. The gym provides a stylish environment and a friendly attitude to those determined to achieve their goals.

Now enrolling: Winter break classes for teens, beginner classes, intensive training classes and classes geared to office workers.

Where: 0253 Building B, Chaowai SOHO, 6B Chaoyangmen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm  
Tel: 5869 5524, 13910556812  
Website: gleegym.com

(By Jackie Zhang)

## Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Li Zhixin at [lizhixin@ynet.com](mailto:lizhixin@ynet.com).

# A thoughtful 'Greek gift'

By Zhang Dongya

Last year, I went to a performance art exhibition at 798 Art District that collected many foreign artists' works. My favorite piece was by a Greek artist, which showed different shapes of mustaches on an old man's face, including butterflies, rhinoceroses and tree stumps.

I stared at his work for a long time, thinking this artist must be a playful one.

When the host began introducing everyone, I saw that the mustache artist was a man who wore a military suit and an army cap from the Mao Zedong's era. I was delighted that he seemed to be an enthusiast for Chinese culture.

After the opening speech, I got the opportunity to talk to him and learned that he was originally from Greece and born in the 1960s. He said he was a fan of Mao. He drew out a *Little Red Book* — the quotations of Mao — from his suit's pocket.

I eventually learned that the artist had just published a book, and that he would be happy to give me a copy.

He would deliver it to me by EMS, he said.

I thanked him and left my address.

When the book didn't arrive the next day, I got worried. Three days later and I still hadn't received anything. I thought the artist, in his rush to catch his flight, must have forgotten.

"It's a pity," I said to myself.

But just when I was about to give up, Tiffany, a copyeditor, came to me with a package.

"Hi, something from Greece. You got friends there?" she asked.

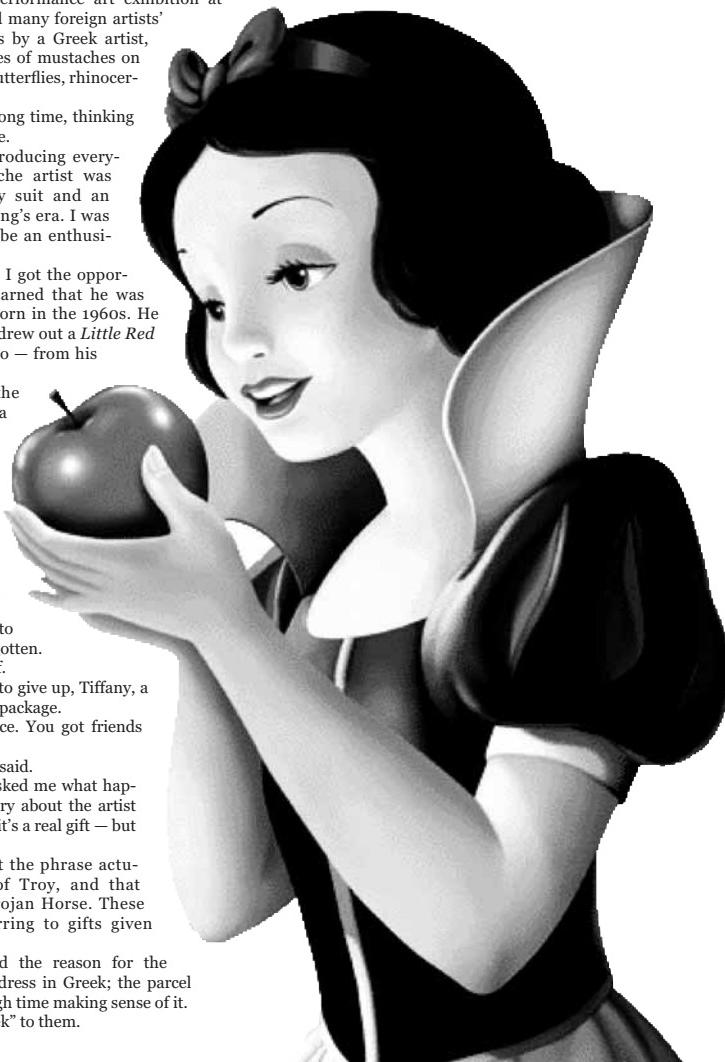
"Oh, this late Greek gift!" I said.

Tiffany was puzzled and asked me what happened. I told her the long story about the artist and the book. She said, "Then it's a real gift — but don't say 'Greek gift.'"

That's how I learned that the phrase actually relates to the Battle of Troy, and that "Greek gift" refers to the Trojan Horse. These days, it's a pejorative referring to gifts given with ulterior motives.

The book was great. And the reason for the delay? He had written the address in Greek; the parcel company must have had a tough time making sense of it.

As they say, it was "all Greek" to them.



## Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to [lizhixin@ynet.com](mailto:lizhixin@ynet.com) together with your name and address.

# Bath Tyrant

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

This sign was likely spotted in a hotel washroom. The mirror light is, in fact, a *jing* (mirror) *qian* (front) *deng* (light — see the character's "fire," as from a lantern?). Easy enough.

Now for "bath tyrant." I have heard of a "bed hog" or a "blanket hog." That's the sleeping partner who takes over the whole bed — blankets, pillows and all — leaving you shivering, in a fetal position, in the corner. I, myself, am more of a "blanketeer," one who defends one's blankets with a vengeance.

Type "bath tyrant" into Urban Dictionary and a piece from William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* comes up. It's the beginning part with the witches, Duncan



and Malcolm, and before we meet the man himself. Macbeth makes sense for the "tyrant" part, but isn't Lady Macbeth the "bath" part? Or at least the "hand-washing" part?

I have experience with tyrannical bath rings that have taken hours of my pre-

cious time, replaced only too soon. Those of you who are used to scrubbing your own bath, before avis came along will know what I'm talking about.

Anyway, in many places, there is a bright heat lamp that hangs above the bath. It keeps you warm while you shower, particularly useful in unheated Shanghai apartments. You can also use it to raise baby piggies or chicks, should you be so inclined.

However, you need to watch your tones on this one. You want to say *yuba* (two fourth tones) — "bath light" — and not *yuba* (second tone, fourth tone), which the Chinese-English dictionary *nicu* defines as a local bully who controls a fishing area and steals your daily catch.

## Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

### 1. She was appointed to go negotiate the introduction of samba dance in China.

**Professor Zhu Shida (ZSD):** Though it is permissible in colloquial English to say "to go negotiate," I think it is not acceptable for standard writing, journalistic or academic. Also incorrect is: People might be convinced to come see a theater performance. The right way to say it is: She was appointed to go and negotiate the introduction of samba dance in China. People might be convinced to come and see a theater performance. When the verb "to go" is combined with another verb, for instance in sports writing, it is usually expressed this way: The high jumper went hurtling over the bar with a world record-breaking performance.

**Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ):** Again, there is a need to step up the language. Instead of falling to the level of a mediocre English teacher's level, get to reading some advanced-level stuff in your area of interest. Actively read it in order to learn how to, first, write to imitate it and then, ultimately, to create your own work.

### 2. Stop gray hair

**ZSD:** I don't think this verb-plus-object combination is logically correct. How can you stop gray hair, since it is something that doesn't move? It turns out that the writer means efforts to stop the growth or spread of gray hair. So the right way to say it may be: stop the graying of hair, stop the growth of gray hair, or stop (or curb) the spreading of gray hair.

**TBZ:** Yes. I think this shortened form comes from advertisement English, which needs a short and catchy slogan to bring customers in. Slogans, unfortunately, do not need to be grammatically correct and, if you watch advertisements critically, they don't need to be logical either. People are easily fooled and believe what they want to believe. It's easier to believe than to think about something carefully.

### 3. Huang's only beginning will be a long journey.

**ZSD:** This also concerns collocation. Please tell me how a beginning can be a long journey. It turns out that the writer wishes to say: There will be a long journey before Huang can accomplish his ideas. Or, it is only Huang's beginning. It will be a long journey to success.

**TBZ:** Aiya! Logic. (See above.) Sigh! Logic is something that takes a good and vigilant editor to recognize. How did Huang get from A to B? "A beginning" is only one point on "a long journey," and a "journey," though consisting of only one true "beginning," may also have many "mini-beginnings" as well.

### 4. He had the kind of beautiful voice needed to follow in his father's footsteps.

**ZSD:** Let's first of all talk about an exemplary sentence: He is committed to helping the poor. Why should we use "helping" instead of "to help"? It is because "to be committed to" is to be followed by a noun or a noun clause. However, this is not the case with the verb "need." We usually say we need to do something. Likewise, in the sample sentence, we should not use the gerund form of the verb to follow, but the infinitive form, that is to say: He had the kind of beautiful voice needed to follow in his father's footsteps.

**TBZ:** If you insist on using the continuous, you can use "needed for following."



# "If I die, you live... If you die, I live..."

# When the bell rings

The last days with a faithful friend



By He Jianwei

This documentary chronicles two years in the life of a hardworking farming couple as they await the death of their aging cow.

The film sets the record for the highest box office returns for an independent film in South Korean film history. It became an instant classic for its portrayal of love and loyalty.



**S**lowly pulling the plow day by day, the old cow has served farmer Choi Won-kyun and his loving but nagging wife in rural North Gyeongsang Province for more than 30 years.

Old Partner, titled Sound of a Cowbell in the original Korean, is new director Lee Chung-ryoul's four-year labor of love.

The touching and sometimes funny tale is a biopic of the lives of the old farmer, his wife and their old cow in Korea's rural area.

Thanks to the hard labor of their beast, the couple has raised and sent nine children to college.

Now successful, Choi's offspring have built new lives for themselves in the booming capital of Seoul. But even with connections to the big city, Choi refuses to abandon his farming work to machinery.

As the cow ages and becomes less and less able to work, Choi takes pity on it, regarding it as his best friend and farmhand. His wife complains when he refuses to trade up for a faster tractor and refuses to put down pesticide, saying it could make the cow sick.

The more she complains, the more jealous Choi's wife becomes of the cow.

By the time Choi is in his 80s, he is clearly physically unfit for labor. His children plead with him to sell the cow

and retire. Caving in, he rides the cow one last time to the market, but is disheartened at the low bids the buyers offer for his friend.

Calling the cow better than men, he and the old animal walk the weary road home. On the way, he falls asleep at the reigns and the cow saves him from an accident.

As the cow weakens, Choi calls in a veterinarian who says the animal has only one year left to live. Choi resolves to act as a mourner and follow the animal in death.

Lee's film opened in January 2009 and drew more than 3 million viewers - an unheard of number for a Korean indie film. With an investment of less than 2 million yuan, it shattered box office records netting 120 million yuan in profit.

Last month, the film showed at the first Beijing International Film Festival.

While the film brought Lee overnight success, it on several occasions pushed him close to suicide.

Previously, the bulk of Lee's work

had been in televised documentaries. He directed more than 1,000 documentaries during his career. But several years in Seoul convinced him that he needed to escape to recapture the beauty and simplicity of rural life.

"I felt out of place in the big city because I grew up in a village," Lee says. "I felt nostalgic remembering the sound of the cowbell ringing as my dad worked the field."

While modern life may be easier, Lee recalls with fondness his days of working the fields by his father's side.

"For many urbanites, 'rural' areas refer to vacation homes and

villas. They don't know how their forefathers lived. But seeing that generation age and pass away, I knew I had to preserve and retell the story of the way they lived," he says.

He found a couple working with an old and dying cow in a town in Gyeongsang Province and decided to follow their daily life until the cow died.

At first, the documentary was going to be made for a TV station. After a year of filming, the old cow refused to die and lived two years longer after the veterinarian's initial diagnosis.

As the film was being made with borrowed money, the director felt pressured to meet his deadline. Eventually, the TV station dropped the project and some of his crew left.

In desperation, the director prayed the cow die faster. It was a shameful wish, as he pressed on with the aid of his classmate, the producer Goh Young-jae.

Lee showed sympathy and sentimental attachment using scenes of tears in the eye of the farmer and the wife, and even the cow in its final days.

It was a life-changing experience, Lee said.

As the first independent recipient of the Rookie Director Award at the PaekSang Arts Awards, an annual award ceremony for creators of outstanding South Korean entertainment, more producers are looking to fund his documentary ideas.

While he enjoys the attention, he laments that he is the only one receiving it.

"It's tough for indie film directors to get financial backing in South Korea. I hope the situation changes," he says.

